



L.S.B.L.

A YOUNG MASAI WOMAN  
LAUGHS AT ALL PROBLEMS

KENYA  
CONTRASTS AND  
PROBLEMS

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KENYA  
CONTRASTS AND  
PROBLEMS

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*To*  
*My Black and My White Friends*  
*in Kenya*



## P R E F A C E

KENYA HAS suffered considerably in the past from books written about it by people who have spent very little time there. Whatever other criticisms may be made of *Kenya : Contrasts and Problems* I trust that at least I shall not be accused of writing without sufficient experience of the country.

I was born and bred in Kenya, and I have spent the greater part of my life there. As the son of a missionary, I have always been intensely interested in the problems which concern the welfare of the natives, and my work has given me every opportunity to study those problems from the native point of view. I learnt the Kikuyu language as a child and it became almost my native tongue. Even now I frequently find myself thinking in Kikuyu instead of in English. In many ways I am more a Kikuyu than an Englishman, for I am a member of the Mukanda age group and an initiated first-grade elder.

In writing this little book my main object has been to describe briefly some of the problems which have arisen in Kenya as a result of the impact of black and white races. I want to make people in England who are interested in colonial affairs realize that the greatest problem of all is that of winning the co-operation, friendship and trust of the natives and thus helping

them to develop so that they can take their due place in the Empire. I am convinced that most of the misunderstandings in Kenya are due to the failure of the Europeans to realize the native point of view. I sincerely hope, therefore, that many of the white people living in Kenya will read this book and give it serious consideration.

The earlier chapters may seem at first to have little or no relation to my main thesis. The first, for example, is impressionistic and is intended mainly as a background. The second, which outlines Kenya's past history, has a real bearing on some of the present-day problems such as desiccation and soil erosion and is included for that reason. The third chapter, entitled 'Oddities of Nature', is the only one about which I have had serious misgivings, and for a time I contemplated omitting it from the book. My reason for finally including it is that I decided that it has general interest of a real kind. The fourth chapter, on 'Safari', is important because it brings out the fact that the opening up of the country to motor traffic is raising special problems in connexion with the impact of European civilization upon the African races and because it leads on to the discussion of problems of native administration.

Where necessary I have not hesitated to make criticisms, but I have done so in a friendly spirit and without bitterness. If anything I have said causes pain to my European friends in Kenya, I must ask to be forgiven ; I have written in the belief that honest and friendly criticism is of value even when it does cause pain.

## PREFACE

Kenya has always had a greater measure of publicity than other British African colonies. One of the reasons for this is that the European community in Kenya is continually demanding more control of the Government, and so inviting publicity and criticism. I have tried to show why, in my opinion, Britain would be unwise to accede to this request.

Just at present Kenya is perhaps more in the public eye than ever. As my book goes to press a Commissioner is being sent out to investigate its financial situation, particularly in connexion with the complaint made by the settlers that taxation is too high and the government of the country too expensive. Many of the Kenya settlers would like to see the administrative staff drastically reduced in order to lower the cost of the governmental machinery. I disagree, on the ground that such a reduction of staff would be detrimental to the interests of the native population, for whom we are trustees; but I have indicated at least one other way in which I believe administrative expenses could be reduced and in a manner beneficial rather than harmful to all concerned. If we pursue a policy in Kenya—and indeed in all British Africa—which alienates the sympathies of the black races, we may one day find ourselves in violent conflict with them. We must do everything we can to win their co-operation, and we shall then have nothing to fear.

The conflict at present raging in Abyssinia, on the northern boundary of Kenya Colony, is also focussing attention upon Kenya and its problems.

The Italians want to seize Abyssinia for two main

reasons : they want a colony which can provide them with raw materials, and they want an outlet for their surplus population. The highlands of Abyssinia are similar in many ways to those of Kenya. A vital question in connexion with colonization in Kenya is whether the country can ever really be a 'white man's country' in the fullest sense of those words. Personally I have grave doubts, and I have indicated my reasons.

If Kenya is ever to be a great supplier of raw materials for British and world markets, I believe it will only be through the development of *native* agriculture. And furthermore I believe that the time will soon come when the native agricultural tribes will have to be given a great deal more land that they are at present allowed to possess, or the aim will not be achieved.

In my concluding chapter I have tried briefly to envisage the future development of the Colony. Time alone can show whether I am right or wrong. Everything really depends upon whether or not some of the present problems which I have described are faced and solved.

L. S. B. L.

10 October 1935

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## I

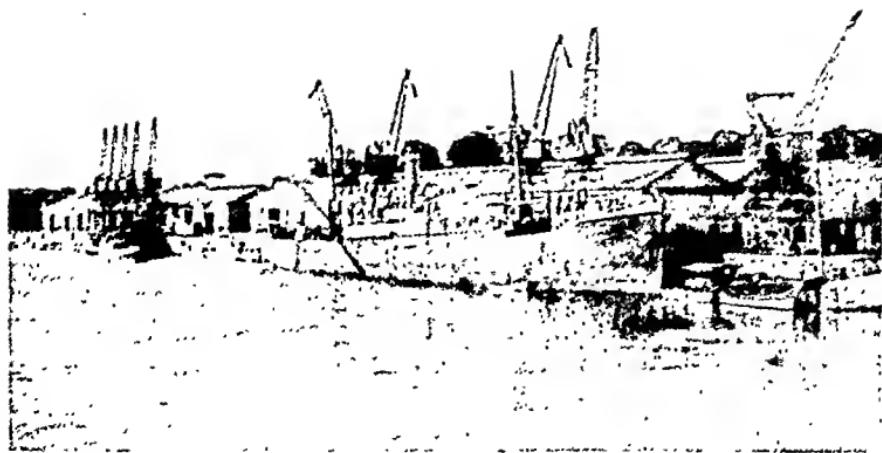
## THE LAND OF CONTRASTS

AS THE modern passenger liner glides slowly into Kilindini harbour, skilfully guided by the pilot, the passengers get their first glimpse of the gateway of Kenya, Mombasa Island. To the right and left of the narrow channel that leads into the harbour white breakers dash against the coral reefs. The sea is of that curious blue that characterizes the Indian Ocean, and stands out in vivid contrast to the white coral cliffs of the island, and in still greater contrast to the deep green of the waving palm trees and the grassy fairways of the Mombasa golf-course. Along the sea front can be seen a number of cars, with here and there the red-tiled roofs of bungalows. For a moment the passenger wonders if he is dreaming. This surely cannot be a tropical port. Between the steamer and that coral coast there is, it is true, a trim little yacht sailing peacefully over the rippling water, just as it might do in the Solent, but close to it is a very primitive outrigger canoe with one black native sitting in the stern, paddling leisurely across from the island to the mainland of Likoni. But then he notices once more the waving coco-nut palms and he recalls that only

yesterday the crossing of the equator was celebrated in the traditional manner.

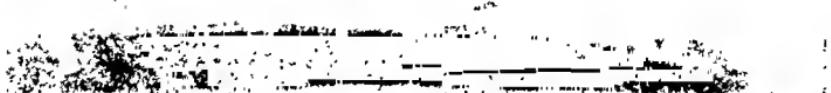
Slowly, slowly the steamer glides into the harbour. Presently an efficient-looking tug comes alongside and pulls her gradually into the quayside. More contrasts meet the eye. On the magnificent deep-water quay are numerous modern electric cranes, looking for all the world like gigantic robot giraffes as they dip their long necks to pick up bales of sisal and bags of coffee and lower them into the holds of steamers already berthed by the quayside. One half expects to see these ultra-modern cranes being tended by white overalled English mechanics. But no ; the men in charge are dusky Africans, while the labour gangs which are bringing the goods from the sheds to feed the cranes consist of the most motley collection of Africans that can be imagined. Here and there, however, the immaculate white drill suit of a European or Goanese customs officer or harbour official stand out in contrast to the ragged dirty clothing of the black dock-hands. On the quay, gathered to meet passengers from the ship, are a number of European residents. Some of the ladies might have stepped straight from the pages of the *Sketch* or the *Tatler*, others are wearing curious corduroy trousers, brightly coloured shirts and such wide-brimmed hats that they would cause a sensation in any English setting.

When all the formality of customs and passport examinations are over, the passengers find rows of taxis waiting to take them from the harbour to the town. Taxis, did I say ? These are no taxis in the ordinary English sense of the word ; they are well



M.D.N.

KILINDINI HARBOUR WITH ITS GIANT CRANES LOOKING FOR  
ALL THE WORLD LIKE MECHANICAL GIRAFFES



L.S.B.L.

MOUNT KILIMANJARO BY MOONLIGHT  
(See page 7)



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kept touring cars with efficient English-speaking African and Arab drivers.

Let us take a drive around the island, and see something of this strange town before we go to the station to board the train for the interior.

The main street leading from Kilindini harbour to the centre of Mombasa is a wide road with tar-macadamed surface. Along both sides are great green, leafy mango trees and of course coco-nut palms. Along the pathways by the roadside walk veiled Arab women in long flowing black robes, and Swahili men in little white skull-caps and long white *Kanzus* that look for all the world like old-fashioned night dresses. Here and there are good-looking Duruma women from the mainland behind the island, women bare to the waist, and wearing below only very abbreviated and much pleated kilts. Here surely we have a typical and genuine tropical African coastal scene, but as we register the thought our eye catches a petrol station that looks as though it had been picked up from the side of an English arterial road and dropped unintentionally here among the palms.

The driver stops to fill up with Shell, and we notice a little group of excited Africans sitting by the roadside, all talking at once and gesticulating wildly. We peep over their heads to see what they are doing. In the middle of the group is a rough wooden board with four rows of small cup-shaped hollows scooped out. Two of the group are moving pebbles with quick jerky movements from one hollow to the next and then the next. Every now and then one or other picks up a handful of pebbles from one of the hollows—appar-

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ently without any reason—and puts them on the ground at his feet. Meanwhile, the excited spectators talk hard and keep making comments on the play or suggesting moves to one or other players. This is a game of *Weso*, the most popular and widespread game in Africa, a game of more than a thousand variations, and a game which requires real skill.

When Mahjong and other Oriental games were all the rage in England an enterprising Englishman worked out and wrote down the rules of one of the simpler variations of this game and offered it to a big London firm suggesting that it should be introduced to England. After studying the rules the head of the firm formed the opinion that this game was 'too difficult' ever to get a footing in England ! Yet it is played by almost every male native throughout Africa, except in a few places where it is being replaced by draughts and various card games.

And now, as our taxi gets into the centre of Mombasa town, more strange contrasts meet the eye. Here is a magnificent stone building with great plate-glass shop-windows in which are displayed the latest London and Paris fashions. There, within a stone's throw, is a curious little corrugated iron shed in which a Goan carries on a small photographic business. Here is an exceedingly up-to-date ladies hairdressing saloon, with a prominently displayed notice calling attention to the fact that permanent waving is carried out by 'the latest Paris methods' ; there, an Indian shop in whose windows are displayed the most amazing variety of goods : carved ebony and ivory elephants, bangles of Indian silver, bead necklaces, Japanese silks, native

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curios, pseudo-Egyptian bronze trays—all mixed up with bathing-costumes, knitting wool and Manchester piece-goods.

Leaving the main street of the town, our driver takes us into the Old Town, where the roads are so narrow that often two cars cannot pass each other. Here, goats and fowls and mongrel dogs, and children, and veiled women and men of all ages and types wander in the road with the greatest unconcern, barely troubling to step aside at the strident screech of our taxi's Klaxon horn. Water sellers with tinkling bells wander about providing drinks for the thirsty; vendors of Arab and native sweetmeats amble slowly along with their wares in basket-work trays on their heads. Many of these old, tall Arab houses with their flat roofs and beautifully carved doorways, have seen far stranger scenes than we see to-day. But the past keeps its secrets well.

Leaving the Arab old town, we are driven into one of the dirty, tumble-down native quarters of the island. Most of the houses here are little more than mud-walled huts, and the roofs vary from a thatch of palm-leaves or grass to sheets of corrugated iron, while not a few consist of old four-gallon petrol tins (locally known as 'debbes') which have been cut open and flattened out, and which are used somewhat in the manner of tiles. Great efforts are being made to-day by the medical authorities to improve housing conditions and reduce disease-carrying vermin and insects in these quarters. The Municipal Authorities have their own model native houses and rooms which they let at very low rentals, and native hut-owners are

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encouraged to carry out improvements of all kinds ; but progress is necessarily slow.

We might linger indefinitely in the native area, so many are the strange and interesting things to be seen. In one corner a sale of hand-made earthenware cooking pots is in progress. Over there an auction of old European second-hand clothes is attracting a large crowd. Yonder under the trees a black follower of the Salvation Army is standing on an old box and holding forth to a motley crowd of Arab children and natives of almost every tribe in the interior—for Mombasa attracts people from all over the country : natives who come down in the hope of earning two shillings a day as dock-hands instead of a mere twelve shillings or so a month as farm labourers on European coffee estates up country.

Pushing on, we are back, almost before we realize it, in the main street and have drawn up outside a luxurious hotel for a quick tea before catching the up-country train.

The island of Mombasa—the gateway of Kenya—has shown us many contrasts, and the authorities of the Kenya and Uganda Railway conspire in their time-table to accentuate the contrasts of the country for us. The up-country passenger trains leave during the late afternoon, and slowly and with much puffing climb the first few hundred feet on their way to the interior. The first ten miles or more traversed are through the same tropical vegetation that we saw on the island ; palm-trees dominate the scene, and there is nothing to shatter our belief that we are practically on the equator. Darkness falls suddenly, unexpectedly like the curtain at the end of the first scene of a play,

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and there is nothing to suggest that daylight will break upon a different scene.

The train itself, though comfortable enough, is sufficiently different from European trains to prevent us forgetting that we are in Africa, and while we dine in the restaurant car, black-skinned attendants make up comfortable beds in all the carriages. When we retire the equatorial heat makes us wonder why it should be deemed necessary to supply each bed with two thick blankets, but about midnight the reason becomes apparent. As the train climbs, climbs, the air gets cooler, and by dawn those two blankets seem barely sufficient to keep us warm.

As the grey dawn gradually changes to brilliant early morning, one of the biggest contrasts strikes us. We are travelling now through dry waterless country sparsely covered with thorn scrub. Here and there is an antelope, and perhaps, if we are lucky, a few giraffe may be idly grazing from the tops of some thorny bush. Here is a new form of tropical Africa, for in spite of the chill in the air the scene looks tropical enough, until our eye lights on something strange on the dim horizon, something so unreal at first sight, so impossible, that we rub our eyes and look again. But it is no mirage. There, clear now against the blue sky, is a magnificent mountain, its summit covered with glistening snow and glaciers: Mount Kilimanjaro.<sup>1</sup> As we watch, however, it hides

<sup>1</sup> Mount Kilimanjaro is not actually in Kenya Colony but in Tanganyika Territory. It can be seen from many parts of Kenya and it seldom fails to show itself for a few moments at dawn.

itself once more in cloud as though ashamed to have been caught sun-bathing in the early morning sun.

The train goes on. Now it winds its way over the rolling Athi plains, where at certain times of the year great herds of game can be seen on all hands. On one side of the line the country is a Game Reserve, on the other it is not ; and it is most noticeable that nowadays the animals seem to have realized that on the right side of the line they are free from molestation. So accustomed indeed, have they grown to the long noisy serpents that pass along the line at intervals throughout the day and night that they take no notice of a passing train, and not a few get killed, especially at night time. To-day, when the camera has so much replaced the rifle in big-game hunting far more giraffe are killed annually by the railway than by any other human agency.

Still the train goes on. Just as we are wondering if the scenery will ever change again, we suddenly become aware of houses, and almost without warning the train draws into the station of Nairobi, the capital of Kenya. One minute we are watching herds of wild animals roving carefree over the open plains and five minutes later—no more—we are in the turmoil of a big railway station.

Black porters are at every window clamouring for our luggage ; the platform is a seething mass of humanity of every race and hue ; we have been transported violently from the garden of Eden to a modern Babel. In the city of Nairobi itself the contrasts are very much the same as those in Mombasa, but having accustomed ourselves to seeing semi-nude

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African men and women mingling with those of white, black and brown races dressed in ordinary European dress or in any and every modification of it, the strangeness does not strike home so forcibly.

The most noticeable contrasts of this part of Kenya are of a different order, and it is no longer alone the sense of sight which registers them. Instead of spending the night at one of those luxurious hotels which advertise themselves as 'bringing Mayfair to Nairobi', let us go out to a country hotel at Limuru. Leaving the business centre of Nairobi, with its long lines of parked cars, its great buses, its noisy throng of shoppers, the road winds out through the beautiful residential area of Muthaiga. Here well-designed houses set in spacious gardens lie back from the road on either side. The gardens are filled with ordinary English garden flowers, which, somehow, do not look out of place, though mixed with flowering trees and shrubs of purely African origin.

All along the road we meet heavily laden women and girls of the Kikuyu tribe coming in from their homes in the Reserve to sell such things as maize, sugar-cane, sweet potatoes, firewood and bananas. Some of these, under the influence of the missionaries, have long since discarded their traditional tribal costume and now wear cotton dresses. Many, however, still wear garments made of well-tanned goat-skin, cut and sewn by themselves. These leather clothes of the Kikuyu women are very different from the scanty kilts of the Duruma women we saw at the coast. Each Kikuyu woman has a well-cut skirt, a short apron and a long cloak; it needs from six to

seven goatskins to make one outfit. Those women who are still in tribal dress wear with it several iron and bronze arm and leg ornaments and big ear-rings of many varieties, while their cotton-dressed sisters have discarded all these and wear instead bead necklaces and possibly ear-rings of European type.

But whether dressed in modern or traditional dress, one and all adhere to their traditional manner of carrying heavy loads upon their backs, the weight being partially supported by a leather strap passed round the load and over the forehead. To Europeans this method of carrying loads seems most unsatisfactory and tiring, but the Kikuyu women will carry anything up to eighty or ninety pounds in this fashion, not only cheerfully, but with ease. I have myself weighed loads which seemed to me unusually heavy and I have found them up to two hundred pounds. One of the most remarkable things about these voluntary beasts of burden is that the majority of them are not content just to carry the load and allow the hands to swing freely. Quite as often as not they walk along busily weaving string baskets ! Among the mission girls and women this practice of doing basket work while load-carrying is rapidly giving way to that of knitting stockings and jumpers. It is a strange spectacle indeed to see a woman heavily laden with a sack of potatoes gaily knitting a stocking, wielding the four needles with such ease that it is hard to believe she was not born to it.

In striking contrasts, too, to this Kikuyu method of transport are the many native-owned lorries we meet. These for the most part are laden with sacks of char-

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coal, which has an unbelievably great sale in Nairobi. Nowadays charcoal burning and charcoal carting is rapidly becoming a staple industry with the Kikuyu.

The road winds on, leaving Muthaiga residential area behind it, and now it passes through immense stretches of coffee plantation ; for Lower Limuru is one of the great coffee-growing districts of Kenya.

Just as we are getting used to seeing coffee trees on every side, the scene changes abruptly and we find that on either side we are shut in by native-owned fields in which maize and bananas, beans and sweet potatoes, yams and castor-oil trees jostle one another. The Kikuyu—for reasons which will be dealt with in another chapter—intermingles most of his crops, instead of planting them in neat rows or in fields of a single crop.

Still the road winds on, climbing steadily. Now it is lined with black-wattle trees, with here and there fields of tea and pyrethrum. By this time the altitude is too great for coffee, and we are back once more in the area of European occupation. All these changes in the scenery have taken place in the short space of eighteen miles. And now, within sight of our country hotel—with its private golf-course, excellent tennis-courts, riding stables, and other amenities of a country hotel in Kenya, we begin to *feel* some of the contrasts as well as to see them. Down in Nairobi this morning we had felt a little cold, but we put that down more to the time of day than to anything else. But here is the highest part of Limuru, although it is nearly midday, a Scotch mist is still hanging about and it is bitterly cold, for we are over 7,000 feet above sea-

level, and it is the cold season. Even during the hot season Limuru is never really hot and it is hard indeed to believe that it is really situated in tropical Africa. At school we were taught that 'the Equator is an imaginary line,' in Kenya we get the impression that not only the line is imaginary but also the equatorial climate. At Limuru a big log fire is needed every night and many people find that they require five or six blankets as well as a hot-water bottle to keep them warm in bed. Bitter, biting cold mark both morning and evening of the hot season, and in the cold season the low temperature often continues throughout the day. Yet when at midday the sun is cloudfree, the heat is often too great to be comfortable. It is just these sudden contrasts of temperature that make the cold seem more intense than it is and the heat more oppressive, for actually at Limuru the thermometer seldom sinks to freezing-point or rises above 80° in the shade.

Having left our luggage let us take the car and see what other contrasts we meet with inside a radius of twenty miles or less. The way from Nairobi to Limuru lay along a section of the Great North Road of Africa—the road from the Cape of Good Hope to Cairo. Now we travel by some of the lesser local roads, which have, unfortunately, by no means all-weather surfaces. First of all let us go down to Kiambaa, where Chief Koinange lives. Koinange did not come into contact with civilization until after he was a grown man, but he is exceedingly progressive and exceptionally keen on the development of his people. I can remember quite well when he lived in

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a village consisting of a number of dirty windowless huts ; now his house is a well-built stone one. But it is not of his house that Chief Koinange is most proud, but of his flower garden. Not many years ago the idea of cultivating any plant except as food or for other economic purposes was utterly foreign to the Kikuyu, but to-day many of them have quite good flower gardens, and Chief Koinange's garden stands out as one of the best. Roses and carnations are the flowers he prefers, but when he was in England recently he was so struck by the display of tulips in Hyde Park that now he wants to grow tulips too. Unfortunately tulips, like many other European bulbous plants, do not like African conditions, and his tulip bed is not a success. The contrast between Chief Koinange's house, with its clean airy rooms, its flower and fruit garden, and the houses, or rather huts, of some of his relations who are his neighbours, is so striking that one can hardly believe that he and they were brought up and educated—in the native sense—together. Nevertheless, Koinange is not unique among Kikuyu to-day. Several whom I know personally have gardens nearly as good as his ; and year by year more and more Kikuyu are realizing the beauty of flowers.

From Koinange's we will motor across to one of the big native markets, at Wangigis. The road, which has a surface of earth without metalling of any kind, is terribly dusty. By the look of the sky ahead we are going in a few minutes to *feel* as well as see another of Kenya's contrasts. We pass first through land in European occupation, then into Reserve territory

where the road is kept up by native funds. The Kikuyu people to-day need roads throughout their land, since many of them, as we have seen, use lorries to take produce into Nairobi. This particular road leads, like several others, to the biggest market of the area, where we shall find a number of lorries waiting to take loads of vegetables to Nairobi. Our car so far has been raising clouds of dust : now, suddenly, we pass on to wet slippery mud and skid badly. We shall have to put on chains before proceeding any farther. Storms of rain are often so local that the line across the road separating clouds of dust from seas of mud is often nearly as sharp as a line drawn with a stick. Accidents are frequent, especially at night time, when drivers cannot see sufficiently far ahead to know when they are about to pass from a dry, dusty road to a surface of slippery, treacherous, wet clay.

Wangigis market is a purely Kikuyu market, held every Monday and Thursday, and until a few years ago it would have been difficult to find there anything that was not of native origin. Even to-day the wares are mostly grown or otherwise produced by the natives and the method of sale is still to a large extent primitive. But there is a great deal that seems curiously out of place. Let us take a glance around. In the centre of the market-place is a vast throng of native women, most of them seated on the ground with their legs straight out in front of them, a few standing or strolling. Some of the women are in cotton dresses but the majority are in the traditional Kikuyu tanned goat-skin dress that we have already seen. By each woman

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are little piles of the produce she has brought to sell. It is the custom to make these little piles, each of which is ten cents worth. Here is one woman with twenty piles or pennyworths of sweet potatoes, there one with bananas. Here is a third with little gourds full of beans, and another of castor-oil berries. All of these things are in keeping with the general scene. But now look at these : here, a very good quality of rhubarb ; there, a woman with bundles of turnips and carrots ; yonder, another with beetroot. These vegetables are now commonly grown by the Kikuyu but very seldom consumed by them. Instead, they are brought to market, where enterprising Kikuyu men buy them up at ten cents a bundle, put them in sacks and baskets, and transport them to Nairobi to supply the English housewives in the residential areas. If we move across to the far side of the market we can examine the fuel for sale. What a contrast ! In other parts of the market one gets the impression that everything is ludicrously cheap, but here are bundles of firewood that certainly have less fuel bulk than a sack of coal, and which yet sell for more than the price of a sack of coal in London. That fuel should cost not only relatively more but actually more in a Kikuyu market in the native Reserve than it does in London, is one of the strangest anomalies of all. I need not discuss the cause of it here, for that and similar problems have their own place in this book.

On another side of the market we find a section for ornaments and hardware. Here are women selling rough asymmetrical hand-made cooking-pots, and, in violent contrast, a man selling aluminium saucepans

made in Japan. There is an old native member of a jeweller's guild busy fixing one of the elaborate copper armlets on to the arm of a young girl client ; while next him is a well-dressed young man with a stall on which he is exhibiting all manner of bead necklaces, bangles and bracelets made in such far-flung places as Japan, Athens and Birmingham.

In yet another part of the market some thirty or forty old Kikuyu men and women sit in a row, each with a small receptacle between his legs and a bundle of neatly-cut banana bark squares by his side. This is the snuff section. The snuff is made from native-grown tobacco by purely native processes, and each seller has his own particular brand or blend. Here surely is something purely African, uninfluenced by European contact. But look again. The container in which this old Kikuyu gentleman keeps the snuff he offers for sale is a Huntley and Palmer's biscuit tin ; that one over there keeps his in a Chiver's seven-pound marmalade jar ; next him is a woman with hers in a gourd of traditional type. Nor do the snuff-boxes which eager buyers are filling up with snuff show less contrast. This highly decorated young warrior with his body covered with a shining mixture of red ochre and castor oil, and his hair hanging in a long, well cared for pigtail, has an old English brass door-handle with a horn stopper as his snuff-box ; another has an old electric bulb from the headlight of a motor-car, but altered and modified to such an extent that it is not easy to guess its origin without a careful examination. In contrast to these are the more common and of course traditional snuff-boxes of horn and wood.

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Contrasts, contrasts—we could go on finding them indefinitely in the market-place. But we must not linger longer if we are to see something of the neighbourhood and get back to our hotel before dark.

From here we can motor along another of the many Reserve roads that lead to and from the market, right through the Reserve towards Limuru station. All around is a sea of green vegetation ; gardens and fields extend on every hand. The density of the population here is about five hundred to the square mile, and every bit of soil is fully utilized. After about ten miles the scenery changes abruptly and we come out into rolling grass country, and a mile or two farther on we find ourselves looking over the edge of the Great Rift Valley—that stupendous crack running from the north of Palestine to the Zambezi river. The road descends rapidly ; in a few miles we drop 2,000 feet. The contrast between this and the Kikuyu Reserve, a few miles back, is scarcely believable. We are in a different world. The vegetation is dried up and withered, the soil is parched, and the heat is terrific. Apart from one or two buildings of a European farm that nestles by a small stream fed from a spring in the vertical wall of the Rift Valley, there is no sign of human habitation as far as the eye can see. Out on the floor of the valley countless spiral 'dust devils' move slowly along for a few minutes and then fade away like ghosts. Over there, towering against the plain, is the magnificent volcanic pile of Longenot, a silent guardian of the dusty plain.

We shall return to the great Rift in another chapter.

Now let us go and see yet another of Nature's contrasts before the darkness falls. High up above us at the top of the escarpment is a thick forest belt. To get to it we must retrace our steps a little, climb the escarpment road, and turn left. In a few miles we reach the forest zone, a dense jungle of bamboo, so tangled that we cannot force a way through it without cutting. Here and there the bamboo gives place to more ordinary forests of giant pencil cedars and wild olives, and here we catch a glimpse of beautiful Colibus and other monkeys, which, with a few forest pigs and that rare shy animal the Bongo, form the principal inhabitants of the forest.

And so back to our hotel to sit by a great log fire on the edge of the Equator and ponder over the strange contrasts which Kenya has shown us in the short space of thirty-six hours. There was the damp sweltering heat of Mombasa, with its palm and mango trees, its motley of humanity and its mixture of all that is newest and finest in the material part of the civilization with the primitiveness and sordid dirt of the native quarter. There was the strangeness of an ice-capped mountain rising to view when all around us was waterless thorn scrub and tropical heat. There was Nairobi, with its great natural park, the Game Reserve, coming right up to its boundaries on one side, and on the other the densely populated Kikuyu Reserve and the European plantations of tea and coffee and wattle. There was modern transport in the form of cars, buses, lorries, and trains all mixed up with women carrying immense loads on their backs, knitting jumpers and stockings the while. From dusty roads to slippery

## THE LAND OF CONTRASTS

seas of mud we passed from green fields to sun scorched plains, and back to bamboo forest, all in the space of an hour and a half. And now we sit by a fire on the Equator and listen to the suave voice of the B.B.C. announcer saying: 'The final scores in the Test Match at Lord's to-day were . . .' Kenya is indeed the land of contrasts.

## II

### GLIMPSES OF KENYA'S PAST

IF WE could go back to Kenya as it was about a million years ago we should find it very, very different from to-day. And if we could watch the passage of those intervening years we should see change after change taking place, gradually altering both the physical features of the country and the human and animal populations, until at last we reached present-day conditions.

In this chapter I shall try to give a simple account of some of the secrets of Kenya's past, which have been revealed through the work that I and my colleagues have carried out during the past ten years. The picture will inevitably be incomplete, for there is much that is still unknown, much that will never be known, but, even such as it is, it is full of interest. And if it is true that history repeats itself, that the study of the past helps to reveal the future, then we may hope that these glimpses of Kenya's past may yield us some indication of what lies in the future.

In the last chapter we saw something of Mombasa Island and the coastal plain, we caught a glimpse of the snow-capped peak of Mount Kilimanjaro, we visited Limuru with its European climate, and we

## GLIMPSES OF KENYA'S PAST

motored down the road which descends into the Great Rift Valley. About a million years ago, when, so far as we know, man first appeared upon the scenes in Kenya, the physical geography of the land was very different. Mombasa Island was still beneath the sea, a living coral mass. The coastal plain which now is green with palms was also under the sea. Indeed, the relative levels of land and sea along the whole African coast, and in fact all over the world, was very different. What are now semi-arid areas of thorn scrub had a plentiful rainfall. The ice, glaciers and permanent snows which to-day cap mountains like Kilimanjaro and Kenya, then extended to far lower levels. And not only these ; but mountain ranges which to-day have no trace of ice or snow were also regions of permanent winter. High altitudes like Limuru almost certainly had cold snowy winters, and the Great Rift Valley as we know it to-day did not exist at all. The greater part of the area now cut through by this great crack was covered by an immense lake, while the greatest of all African lakes to-day, Victoria Nyanza, extended its waters over a much greater area.

It is not easy to explain where all the water necessary for these immense lakes came from, but then it is equally difficult to account satisfactorily for the waters that were locked up at about the same time in the great ice-sheets that extended over so much of Northern Europe and America. Whatever may have been the cause—and many scientists to-day attribute it to the fact that solar radiation was different then from now—it is certain that the climate over the whole world at about this time was both wetter and colder than it is

to-day. The climate of Northern Europe, including large parts of England, was very similar to that of Greenland to-day, and Central Africa was very, very much wetter and considerably colder. Large areas of Kenya which to-day are so dry that they can only support a few desert-loving animals, were the homes of vast herds of animals that could only live near permanent water. And what strange animals many of these were !

Kenya still has animals which are really prehistoric. The rhinoceros, the giraffe and the gnu, for example, have managed somehow or other to survive as living reminders of the past. But the animals that failed to survive were still more curious. There was that curious cousin of the elephant called the *Deinotherium*. It had short downward-curving tusks in its lower jaw, instead of long straight or upward-curving ones in the upper jaw like all modern elephants. Just as the elephants and rhinoceroses of to-day are survivals from the immediate past, so the *Deinotherium* was a survival from a still earlier period.

Then there were curious horse-like animals called *Hipparium*, which had three toes on each foot instead of the single toe or hoof of the horses of to-day. The *Hipparium* too was a survival from an earlier period ; in Kenya as well as in other parts of the world it held its own for quite a long time. In fossil beds in Europe—deposits which belong to a period before the appearance of man—scientists have found numerous remains of these curious three-toed horses. Commonly their bones are associated with the bones of an animal which is practically indistinguishable from that curious animal of the Congo forests, the

## GLIMPSES OF KENYA'S PAST

Okapi. Why the Okapi should have managed to outlive the Hipparion we shall possibly never know for certain, although we have some indications which we will discuss towards the end of this chapter.

Another curious animal of this time was a giant sheep-like creature with an immense horn span. This sheep apparently stood as high as a large horse, and must have been a formidable beast.

All these and many other extinct animals as well as most of those that still abound to-day wandered over Kenya in the days of long ago, and, what is more, were hunted by the early Stone Age men of the country. At present we have very little knowledge of these men—just a few fragments of skull and bone suggesting that the men were real ancestors of present-day men and not merely abnormal cousins.

But though we have few fragments of the men themselves, we have vast quantities of the tools and weapons of stone with which they armed themselves, and one of the most striking things about these is their amazing similarity in type to the stone weapons of the men who inhabited Europe at about the same time. The stone tools that we find do not, of course, represent the total material possessions of these ancient men ; they are simply the small imperishable residue. Most of the things that men made for themselves in those early days were probably objects of wood or skin and these have not survived the passage of time. Look around the room in which you sit as you read this, and try to estimate how many of the objects you see will survive even a thousand years, much less a million, and you will begin to

realize how impossible it is to gauge a culture from its imperishable things.

Have we, then, no clues as to what the possessions of these early men were like? I think we have; but only if we can be experimental (though cautious) in our interpretations; and only, too, if we remember to distinguish between theories and facts.

There seems to be very little doubt that the stone tools and weapons were the principal cutting weapons of the men of these early days (besides, of course, their own teeth), and the measure of the usefulness of the stone tools of the different periods of evolution of Stone Age cultures is thus to some extent the measure of the whole culture. With the tools of the period I am talking about at the moment—rather shapeless stone tools with jagged cutting edges—I have proved that it is possible to cut off the skins of wild animals. Thus hides were available to these people, and we may assume, I think, that hides were used by them. These same tools on the other hand are practically useless for cutting wood, so that probably wood could only be used in such forms as could be shaped by simply breaking and bending. Undoubtedly the sharp pointed horns of wild animals were available to them, and it would be very surprising if they did not utilize them for, say, digging up roots of edible plants, or fixing on the end of straight branches to make spears. Bone, too, these people had, and though there is practically no evidence that they ever shaped bone, broken splinters of bone are common, such as could have been used for a number of purposes without the need of shaping them.

Gradually, as hundreds and thousands of years passed, men became more skilful in the making of stone implements, and by the time that the culture stage called Acheulean had been reached, the imperishable part of man's culture, his stone tools, had developed to such an extent that we are justified in thinking that the perishable part had probably developed in proportion. By this time, too, some of the curious animals that flourished when man first appeared on the scene had disappeared altogether, but others, like the three-toed horse and the giant sheep, were still present, and on the whole the geography of Kenya was not so very different from that described earlier in this chapter. And then suddenly things changed.

Volcanoes had long been very active in the land as though heralding some great convulsion of the earth. Now this convulsion, or rather series of convulsions, occurred, and as a direct result the geography of Kenya—nay, of the whole of Africa—was changed. The Great Rift Valley—in the form in which we know it to-day—was born. There had undoubtedly been great earth movements and earthquakes before in this country, but nothing that was comparable to that which now took place. From the scientific point of view the Rift Valley in its present form in Kenya must have happened in a moment. By 'moment' I do not mean a day or even a year: probably a thousand or more years were involved; but to us a thousand years is but a moment when compared to the million or more years with which we are dealing.

With the formation of the Great Rift Valley came

## KENYA : CONTRASTS AND PROBLEMS

the extinction of a very large number of species of animals that formerly flourished in Kenya.

We cannot say for certain why this should have happened, but, as I suggested above, we have certain indications which may or may not point to the true cause. We know that even to-day earthquakes and violent eruptions let loose poisonous gases from the centre of the earth, and that this kills off everything that is living in the surrounding country. It seems highly probable that something of the sort happened then. But if so, why are there left in Kenya *any* animals that flourished in the days before the convulsion? Why have the gnu and the giraffe and the rhinoceros, for example, survived when the three-toed horse and the giant sheep and so many others have gone? An absolutely certain answer cannot be given, but for me, at any rate, the probable answer is that the animals of these types were living not only in the neighbourhood of the area where the Great Rift Valley was brought into existence, but also in other parts of the continent that were not affected, and that when the poisonous gases had dispersed these animals in due course spread back. In other words I suggest that in that remote period, as to-day, some species of animals had a more or less limited distribution in Africa, while others covered the continent, and that those whose habitat happened to coincide with the area affected by the Great Rift Valley and the other movements that accompanied it, perished for all time. If my view is correct, it is not impossible that man too was wiped out in the regions round the Great Rift Valley. Certainly we know that whereas



Paul Hoeffer



I.S.B.I.

(Above) BAT-EARED FOXES—SHY, PRETTY LITTLE ANIMALS  
 (See page 40)

(Below) THE SKULL AND HORMS OF A GIANT FOSSIL SHEEP



four distinct culture groups were in existence in Kenya before the formation of the Great Rift Valley, only two are present in the deposits which represent the period immediately following it, and both of them are cultures which we know were already flourishing outside the affected area.

And now we must look for a short time at these later people. The most interesting were a race to whom the name of Aurignacians has been given. For the most part, but not entirely, they lived in caves and in rock-shelters and it is by careful and scientific investigation of these that we have found out something about them. Unlike the makers of the earlier culture which we called Acheulean, these people used a wide variety of tools, exhibiting great skill and ingenuity in the making of them. Instead of employing one or two 'general utility' tools they made different kinds of tools for different purposes. Their knives were made after a pattern which we still employ to-day—a sharp blade with a cutting edge along one side and a carefully trimmed blunt back along the other. For the purpose of transforming the skins of animals into soft, supple leather they had scraping or braying tools whose essential shape is still retained in the metal-braying and skin-scraping tools of many races to-day.

For weapons of defence they made beautifully symmetrical crescent-shaped barbs, which could be used on the points of both arrows and spears. Chisels too they had, and files, and they made fine awls of bone chips carefully trimmed and sharpened. With such an equipment as this there can be no doubt at

all that the perishable part of their material culture was highly developed.

We have good reason to believe that these Aurignacians had developed religious and artistic proclivities. They buried their dead with great care and ceremony, covering the bodies with red ochre and often placing offerings in the grave. In some parts of the world—but not as yet in Kenya—there is good proof of the artistic ability of the Aurignacians and their descendants in the wonderfully naturalistic cave paintings which they have left. In Kenya, too, I have little doubt, the Aurignacians practised cave art, but ancient cave art is only preserved if the rocks on which the paintings were executed are of such a kind as not to scale away with the passage of time, and so far in Kenya the caves and shelters which have yielded Aurignacian culture have been in areas where the rock is quite unsuitable for the preservation of paintings.

Just as the physical geography of Kenya in the days before the Great Rift Valley was formed differs from that of the present day, so too at the time of which I am speaking now it was different, but the differences were fewer and less striking. Mombasa Island had come into existence and was inhabited, as was the coastal plain. But, so far as our evidence goes, the inhabitants were not of the Aurignacian race, but men of an entirely different and more primitive culture. At present, in Kenya, we have no evidence of what this other race looked like, if indeed in this instance a different culture implies a different race. On the other hand we know that in Palestine

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and in France at about the same time a Stone Age culture very closely resembling the one on Mombasa Island (and also in places inland) was being made and that its makers, far from being of the same race as the Aurignacians, were actually of a different species, and even, in the opinion of some scientists, of a different genus. Certainly the makers of this culture, called Levalloisian, were not ancestors but merely brutish cousins, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that here in Kenya the same culture was made by a people of a similar type.

In other words there is good reason to believe that at this time Kenya was inhabited both by a type of man who is ancestral to present-day man, and also by a human type which has now become extinct, a branch of the Neanderthal species.

In the interior of Kenya, the floor of the Great Rift Valley had, as it has to-day, a chain of lakes; but whereas these lakes are now shallow and alkaline to a greater or lesser degree, in those days the lakes were much more extensive, much deeper, and their waters were fresh. This is proved not only by the existence of old high-level beaches around each of the present-day shrunken lakes, but also by the remains of fresh-water shells and fishes which are found in these gravels.

For the lakes to have stood, one and all, at a much higher level than to-day we have to postulate climatic conditions considerably wetter than those now prevailing. Other lines of evidence support this view. We know that the lakes did not remain at their high levels very long, and that, gradually and slowly dwindling, they sank to at least their present

level, and more probably dried up altogether. In fact there is a great deal of evidence to show that this wet period was followed by a short period of intense aridity, and that desert conditions reigned over most of Kenya.

Then came a further change in climate and once more the lakes rose, until again they stood at a much higher level than they do to-day. The information which we have obtained as to the alternating changes of climate during the Stone Age is not only of academic interest, it has—as we shall see in the last chapter of this book—a very vital bearing upon the future of the country.

During this new wet period we have much evidence that Stone Age man in Kenya evolved and developed his culture still farther. Towards the close of the Aurignacian period man had discovered something of the properties of clay, but it is only now that fully developed pottery appears upon the scene, to represent one step farther in the progress of culture. Apart from this new development, the imperishable part of man's culture differed very little from that of the preceding period, and we have little extra knowledge of his mode of life.

One thing, however, seems fairly certain : the human race in Kenya was already split up into what were probably a number of tribal divisions, with distinct variations of the general culture. Near the big lakes, groups or tribes of these people seem to have developed a habit of living almost exclusively on shell-fish, and this habit resulted in the leaving of great rubbish mounds of shells, in which pottery and stone

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tools occur, but in which the bones of animals are almost entirely wanting. In other areas at the same period small antelopes seem to have formed the principal article of diet. But doubtless both those who lived on shell-fish and those who lived on meat, supplemented these foods with various roots and fruits of plants, of which, however, no absolute proof remains.

Then another short period of dry climate intervened, to be followed by renewed wet conditions. This last wet period reached its apex somewhere about 1,000 B.C., and coincided with the last truly Stone Age culture. After that the idea of using metal spread rapidly, and though for a very long time stone tools were used with metal, the real Stone Age had come to an end.

During the last phase of the Stone Age the inhabitants of Kenya seem to have been in contact with traders from some of the civilized countries of that time, such as Egypt, for on excavating sites of the period we occasionally find beads of Egyptian or even Mesopotamian origin. Probably traders came to Kenya in search of ivory, and possibly even of gold, and brought with them trade goods in the form of beads. Probably, too, it was these traders who introduced agriculture and domestic animals to the Stone Age people of this period, for we find many indications that they were practising agriculture at this time, and that they had sheep and possibly even cattle.

Even at this time (about 1,000 B.C.) the climate of Kenya must, as I have said, have been considerably

wetter than to-day, for the lakes in the Great Rift Valley stood at a much higher level, and small Stone Age agricultural communities flourished in regions where to-day agriculture is quite out of the question.

Since then the climate of Kenya has gradually but slowly grown drier. The agriculturalists, who were the last real Stone Age inhabitants of Kenya (so far as we know), did not live in caves as their ancestors had mostly done, but built themselves circular stone enclosures in which doubtless they erected huts. In some cases even they seem to have built small stone houses, the walls of which consisted of roughly piled up stones—not, of course, of properly built stonework.

Their methods of burial were very different from those of their predecessors. All the evidence suggests that when they buried some important person, they killed some of his slaves, or possibly even his wives and buried them with him. They appear to have had some very definite belief in a life after death, for we know of one case of a man who, having lost three teeth during his life, carefully kept them, and when he died was buried with them put back into his mouth, so that he might have the use of them in the next world.

We do not of course know what was the skin colour of any of the Stone Age people, or what their hair was like, but the shape of their faces and their general features can be estimated from their skulls, and it is certain that they were not typical negroes. This does not mean that they may not have been dark skinned and curly haired ; they very likely were ; but there is no native race in Kenya to-day to which they can

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be compared. What has happened to them? For the moment we can only speculate. It is my personal opinion that many of the present-day tribes are a product of an intermingling of the Stone Age agriculturists with an invading Negro stock which came possibly from the Sudan. Only time and much more research can help to elucidate this problem, I am also inclined to believe that a curious tribe in the neighbouring land of Tanganyika Territory are possibly the nearest true descendants of the Neolithic agriculturalists. This tribe, called by those around them the Wambulu and by themselves the Iraki, have physical features which very strongly call to mind those of the men who lived in Kenya at the close of the Stone Age. Furthermore, as is evinced by recent discoveries in Tanganyika Territory, this tribe lived until quite recently in stone-built huts and used stone pestles and mortars very like those found on the sites of the Neolithic agriculturalists.

No glimpse of Kenya's past would be complete without some mention of a famous ruined town which lies on the coast some sixty-five miles north of Mombasa. Gedi has long been known to the European inhabitants of Mombasa, but so far no scientific investigation of the site has been attempted. Little, therefore, can be said about it here. It is historically recorded that very early in the days of the development of Mahomedanism, one branch of the Arabian followers of the Prophet spread down the coast of Eastern Africa, establishing trading centres as they went and settling here and there upon the coast. Persians, too, and Indians have played their part upon the East African

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coast. The question is, which of these peoples was responsible for Gedi, and when? Even a casual inspection of the ruins makes it clear, I think, that there is no Indian influence, and any examination shows that the builders of this town combined an astonishing skill and art in building with an equally astonishing ignorance of how to build lastingly. To-day Gedi is in the grip of a forest which is rapidly destroying it, and the few walls and tombs which are still standing are in grave danger of being reduced to a mass of fallen stone.

It is only to be hoped that before very long someone will organize not only a proper investigation of the ruins, but also some scheme for preserving them from the further ravages of Nature, so that in due course one more glimpse of Kenya's past—and not a very remote past either—may be made known to Kenya's present and future generations.

### III

## ODDITIES OF NATURE

WE HAVE already seen that very many of the existing wild animals in Kenya are really survivals of an earlier period, and this is partly why they are so interesting. Luckily, shooting for the sake of shooting is, to-day, almost a thing of the past; more and more people are turning to the camera as a means of collecting trophies. But there are many camera trophies which most people never attempt to collect because they do not realize how interesting they are.

It is a curious thing that size should still have such a fascination for people. In the days when all hunting was done with a gun it was perhaps natural, for it was obviously a more formidable task to kill a rhino than a hyrax, a more dangerous and therefore a more thrilling game to hunt a lion single-handed than to hunt a fox. But nowadays all that has changed. It is far easier to photograph a hulking rhinoeeros than a timid and wary hyrax. One would have thought that the object of all hunting sport was to achieve the difficult, but apparently that is not so. It is still the big and obvious animals that are sought after, while the smaller and often far more interesting ones are left alone.

Let us take the hyrax as our first example. Hyraxes, of which there are several kinds, are, in my opinion, at once the commonest, the least seen and the most interesting animals in all Kenya.

For most people, I am afraid, the word hyrax, if it is familiar at all, is only so by reason of the skins which so often adorn the bodies of black African chiefs and fashionable European ladies. Under its commoner name of rock-rabbit it is probably known to more people, while there can be scarcely anyone who has not heard of the 'conies' of the Bible, although they may not have thought of conies as being anything but Palestinian rabbits, which of course they are not.

Even among those who do know the hyrax in Kenya, only a very few realize how odd and interesting an animal it is. The common name of rock-rabbit is most misleading ; it makes almost everyone think of the hyrax as but one other member of the enormous rodent family—the family which includes the rabbits, the rats and the guinea pigs. Those who do not think of the hyrax as a curious kind of rabbit often think of it as a form of guinea pig because of its taillessness and its general shape. But in actual fact the nearest living relations of the hyrax are the rhinoceros and the elephant !

As I said just now, the hyrax is one of the commonest animals in Kenya. Wherever there is forest, or even a few big trees, there will almost certainly be countless hyraxes of the species which makes its homes in holes in tree-trunks. This species is for the most part nocturnal in its habits, but if, during the day, you sit very quietly under a big tree you will, provided that

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you have sharp enough eyes, almost surely to see a hyrax or two come silently out of a hole and sit sunning themselves on a branch. It would perhaps be more accurate to say that you will almost certainly *not* see them come out of a hole, but that quite suddenly you will be aware that there is a hyrax sitting on a branch outside the hole, where a few seconds before there was none. I have watched for hyrax on many occasions and that is my own experience. One moment there is nothing ; then in a brief second of which your attention is distracted by something else, the hyrax has appeared as if by magic, and is sitting quite motionless and very nearly invisible.

The tree-hyrax is an astonishingly agile little animal and a marvellous climber. If, towards evening, you are fortunate enough to find a good hiding-place, and so are able to watch a hyrax feeding, you will be quite astonished at the ease with which it manages to run to the extreme end of the branch of a tree, and then sit eating a tender bud or a young green leaf. Make a slight movement or a low sound, and in a fraction of a second the hyrax will dash along the branches, jumping from one to another as easily as a squirrel, and then run head first straight down the perpendicular trunk of the tree, and disappear into its hole where some branch has rotted away. Even if you supposed the little animal to have claws like a cat or fingers like a squirrel, you would still be surprised at its capacity for climbing ; but actually it has neither claws nor fingers, but feet, which are simply miniature reproductions of those of a rhinoceros. Anything less suitable for tree climbing could hardly be imagined.

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Picture a rhino jumping from branch to branch of a tree made to scale ! The hyrax does not in reality climb so much as run, and its dexterity is made possible by its astonishing sense of balance, aided to some extent by the fact that the soles of its rhinoceros-like feet are soft and rather rubbery.

Incidentally, it is not only in its feet that the hyrax shows its relationship—albeit a distant relationship—to the hulking rhinoceros : the teeth and the jaw and even the whole skull and skeletal structure testify to the connexion. But it must be remembered that, zoologically speaking, the relationship is now sufficiently remote to make scientists put the hyrax in an order of its own.

To-day, all the living varieties of hyrax are small animals about the size of large rabbits, but in the past their ancestors and cousins were, some of them, as big as very big dogs.

Besides the tree-hyraxes there are very many varieties of rock-hyrax. Anywhere in Kenya where there are rocky cliffs, there also you may be sure are hyrax, even if you never see them, for like the tree-hyrax they are very wary and silent in their movement. Indeed they never break their rule of silence except at night, when, if you happen to have camped anywhere near a colony of hyraxes, you will hear too much of them. By day you do occasionally hear a very soft chirruping sound which suggests the presence of an unseen bird : that is hyraxes talking to one another and saying there is danger about.

The connexion between the hyraxes and the elephants is a very curious one. It consists chiefly in the

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fact that these two groups of animals, so different in size and in almost every other particular, have certain parasites in common, and these parasites cannot, so far as we know, live on or in any other animals.

But the hyrax is by no means the only really interesting little animal in Kenya, although the commonest. All over the drier plains country there can be found the little bat-eared foxes, that in reality are not foxes at all but belong to a sub-family of their own. During the heat of the day they stay underground, but they can always be seen by daylight in the early mornings and evenings. Usually they go about in parties of four or five, and many people who see them casually think they are jackal cubs, because they look so woolly and immature. They live for the most part on beetles and grasshoppers and locusts, but take any opportunity they can to get meat. I shall never forget how once I was sitting by a big rocky cliff watching rock-hyrax, when I heard a tremendous squealing above me and looking up I saw a kestrel flying off with a rock-thrush nearly as big as itself held firmly in its claws. The thrush was so big that the kestrel had not been able to kill it, and so heavy that the kestrel could not fly with it properly. As I watched, the kestrel gradually came nearer and nearer to the ground with its still screaming burden, and then suddenly I realized that I was not the only interested spectator. Below where I had been sitting I had noticed a hole in the ground, and from this three little bat-eared foxes had emerged and were now running along the ground as hard as they could go, with their heads upturned and their

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eyes fixed on the descending kestrel and its prey. The kestrel was too engrossed in the task of keeping hold of the rock-thrush and trying to kill it to notice anything, and as a result it landed right in front of the three bat-eared foxes who were soon busy eating both kestrel and thrush.

Bat-eared foxes are very inquisitive and can sometimes be coaxed from their holes by strange noises which they do not recognize and so wish to investigate. Thus it should be possible to get good photographs of them. I, for one, would rather get a good shot with a camera at one of these shy pretty little animals than take a photograph of a lion.

Another very odd animal in Kenya is the aard-wolf, an entirely nocturnal animal very seldom seen by anyone. Occasionally it shows up in the head-lights of a car at night, but even this is very rare, for the aard-wolf is so shy that it runs away as soon as it hears any noise. In appearance it looks a little like a very slender striped hyena, and I believe that on the rare occasions when it is sighted it is often mistaken for this, and that consequently people do not realize what a rare and interesting creature they have had the privilege of seeing.

By far and away the most interesting thing about the aard-wolf is its teeth, which are unlike those of any other mammal in the world, and at first sight could easily be mistaken for those of a reptile similar to a crocodile. The very special development of these teeth is possibly a late adaptation to suit its curious diet, which consists of hard-shelled beetles, but if this is so it is hard to see why the adaptation should

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not have been more in the direction taken by the ordinary insectivores. I have never succeeded in seeing an aard-wolf alive, and I know of very few people who have. Here, therefore, is a fine chance for the big game *camera* hunter to acquire a really rare trophy, more interesting to possess, more difficult to acquire than hundreds of photos of antelopes and zebra.

In England we are apt to think that shrews are the smallest animals in the world, because the English shrew is so small. But in East Africa there are giant shrews, seldom seen, but exceedingly interesting, and probably never yet photographed alive in their natural surroundings.

Nor is it only among mammals that Kenya possesses such interesting oddities (and I have only mentioned a few of them); in the bird world there are some truly amazing specimens to be seen by those who care to look for them. It is curious that whereas so many people take an unbounded interest in bird life in England, only a few specialists seem to do so in Kenya. This is probably partly due to the fact that Kenya has such an enormous variety of birds that it is very hard to get to know them, and partly because of the common and quite fallacious belief that tropical birds are none of them good songsters, and that they are therefore less interesting.

The birds of Kenya are to-day very well known indeed, thanks to the untiring efforts of Dr. L. G. Van Someren and a few others, but there is an enormous amount still to be learnt about their habits and much of this is of more than academic interest.

## KENYA : CONTRASTS AND PROBLEMS

Plovers all the world over normally nest on the ground and their young run about like the young of domestic fowls, as soon as they are hatched. But in Kenya there is a plover that for some unknown reason builds a floating nest out on the open water. So far no one has seen what happens when the chicks are hatched. Obviously they cannot just run from their nest and start feeding. But the adult birds do not seem to be adapted to feed their young in the nest in the way that robins and thrushes, for example, do, so that we cannot suppose that the young plovers stay in their nest on the water until they can fly. What, then, happens? We can only speculate. Possibly the mother carries her newly hatched chicks to the shore in the way that woodcock are alleged to carry their young when alarmed. Or possibly the floating nest is somehow propelled near to the shore when the chicks are hatched. We cannot be sure. It remains for some keen observer to find out and to make a record with the camera.

One of the most interesting groups of birds in Kenya is probably that of the weavers. All sorts of amazing things are now beginning to be known about them, as the following story will show.

We are most of us inclined to believe, from what we know of birds in England, that each species has its own special egg colour and design which it adheres to fairly closely. Thus, hedge sparrows lay blue eggs, robins mottled brown eggs, sand martins white, and so on. But in Kenya such a simple rule by no means always holds good. One species of weaver bird, for instance, lays eggs of almost every bird's egg colour



A COLONY OF WEAVER BIRDS' NESTS

M.D.N.



## ODDITIES OF NATURE

known in the world—blue eggs, brown eggs, white eggs, and every conceivable kind of blotched egg.

A great deal of mystery still hangs about this fact. We want to know whether a bird which lays blue eggs the first time, can and does lay eggs of another colour the second time. We want to know if young birds hatched from blue eggs necessarily lay blue eggs themselves. We want to know what happens if a male bird hatched from a white egg mates with a female derived from a blue egg and so on. These are really fascinating problems which *nothing* but detailed observation can settle. What an opportunity for a Kenya settler interested in Natural History!

Another Kenya curiosity is a warbler which lays different coloured eggs at different altitudes, and nobody knows why.

Most birds in Kenya have innumerable enemies, and their methods of defending their eggs and young are most amusing and lead to all sorts of problems.

I remember once finding a weaver bird's nest which was obviously quite new though it had no eggs in it. I marked the place down and visited it again six days later. Imagine my surprise when instead of finding a clutch of freshly laid eggs I found three young birds obviously three or four days old. After this sort of thing had happened to me on several occasions I began to wonder if these birds had some special organic development which enabled them to incubate their eggs *in utero* and only lay them just before they were due to hatch. But this was not the solution. One day I found three nests near each other, one of these had eggs in it, the others had not. I marked the nests

and the eggs, and sure enough next day the eggs had been moved to one of the other nests, as a protective measure. This of course explained the problem. But we do not yet know how the eggs are moved.

There are many species of kingfisher in Kenya and I have often heard people express surprise at seeing kingfishers miles away from the nearest water. This is simply because a great many Kenya kingfishers do not catch fish at all, but fish for grasshoppers instead. Is this change from the normal habit of fish eating due to the gradual desiccation of the country ? Or have those kingfishers that do eat fish changed their diet for a more normal insectivorous one ? No one knows.

In the fish world, too, there are plenty of oddities in Kenya. On the coast there are curious little fishes that climb up out of the water and run about on the rocks in a way that would shock any respectable fish. In the interior there are those curious fish which have developed lungs and which are capable of living for very long periods without either food or water. Almost every pond and river has these lung fish, and if the pond dries up in a dry season or drought, the fish simply allow themselves to be dried up with the mud and patiently wait for several years if necessary, until the pond fills up again. But this capacity of water-loving life to do without water if necessary is not confined to these fishes.

In a semi-desert area I once found a tree literally covered with freshwater snails. It had not rained in that area for months, and the whole country was parched up. But a few weeks later, after a good deal

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of rain had fallen, I passed the tree again and found no snails on it at all. Then I discovered the explanation. Near the tree was a slight depression in which water had collected to form a small pond. In the pond were feeding the hundreds of snails which had formerly been on the tree.

Even in the plant life of Kenya there are all sorts of surprises. Let one example suffice. One of the biggest forest trees in Kenya proves on examination to be a daisy!

## IV

### SAFARI

NOWADAYS THERE are comparatively few places in Kenya which cannot be reached by car or lorry, but it would amaze the designers of motor vehicles if they could see some of the country over which their creations—designed for use on roads—are taken. The main roads of the country are on the whole surprisingly good; the lesser roads are seldom worthy of the name at all. Cars and lorries on a motor safari are often driven over open country. But in general, now that the lorry has come into its own, a motor safari can be reckoned as both cheaper and quicker than the foot safari of earlier days. In this chapter, however, I am going to describe some safari experiences which will show that this is by no means always true.

The only long foot safari that I ever made was, as it happens, not in Kenya but in Tanganyika Territory, and although this book is mainly about Kenya, I am going to describe it, as it gives a very good idea of what foot safaris are like.

I had been engaged for eight months as a member of a British Museum expedition which was in search of the fossil remains of ancient reptiles in the southern part of the coastal region of Tanganyika. Our work

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was such that during the whole eight months I never walked less than ten miles a day, and I was thus, when the season ended, in excellent training. I had booked a passage to Europe on a steamer which was due to sail on November 16th, 1924, from Dar-es-Salaam, where I planned to go from Lindi (the port nearest to the site of our work) in a small coastal cargo boat. When I reached Lindi, however, fourteen days before my steamer was due to leave Dar-es-Salaam, I found to my dismay that the cargo boat was not going to call at Lindi, and that no other vessel was due to call there in time to get me to Dar-es-Salaam to catch my boat. Dar-es-Salaam was some two hundred and sixty-nine miles from Lindi, but, there being nothing else for it, I decided to walk there.

It took me about a day to collect thirteen native porters and to buy food and a few other requirements for the journey. As it was obvious that we should have to make a number of forced marches I decided to do without my tent, and to divide up my baggage, so that each porter should carry as much less than the standard load of sixty pounds as possible. In this way the porters would be able to travel farther in a day than was usual. There were, however, two loads which I could not split up : One was a large cage containing two pet monkeys which I was taking home, the other was my large tin trunk ; each of these was slung to a lone pole and carried by two men.

In those days there was no motor road from Lindi to Dar-es-Salaam as there is to-day, but there was a foot-path all the way, along which a mail-runner travelled once a fortnight. Knowing that this runner was in the

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habit of doing the journey in ten days, I reckoned we could just manage to get through in about twelve and a half days, but it would be difficult. A man travelling alone can always go faster than a party of a dozen or more especially when, as in the present case, the party does not really know the way and may lose much time by taking the wrong tracks.

The first day's march was a fairly simple one ; the path was well defined and we were none of us tired. We covered a distance of twenty-two miles without difficulty and camped for the night under a little group of palms by a white sandy beach. The next day's journey too was for the most part easy, except that the porters who were carrying the big monkey-cage found things rather difficult, for the path led through dense bush and the cage, which was much wider than the path, kept catching in thorn bushes.

In the late afternoon we met the first of a series of obstacles which were to slow down our progress so much that it became necessary to march much farther than was comfortable on the other days in order to keep up our average speed. Quite suddenly the path came to an abrupt end and we found ourselves in a stinking muddy patch of mangrove swamp. I knew that somewhere hereabouts we should have to cross the mouth of the Mbemkuru River, but I had understood that there was a ferry, and the muddy swamp was therefore an unpleasant surprise. After a moment or two of indecision I noticed a few signs—broken branches and rubbed leaves—that showed that the path did not really end so abruptly as it seemed to do, and that travellers were in the habit of wading their way through the

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tangled roots of the mangroves and the sticky, stinking mud. Leaving the porters on dry land, my personal attendant and I waded in, and presently we found ourselves on the edge of the open water of the creek. Looking across we could see a village on the far side. We also saw some canoes, and by calling loudly, managed to attract the attention of the owner of one of them, who thereupon quickly paddled over to us.

I asked him the whereabouts of the ferry and he informed me that he and his canoe were the ferry service. It was not reassuring. His canoe was of the simple type cut out of a log of wood. A very small craft, barely eighteen inches in diameter, it was obviously fitted for carrying one or two passengers only. But I had thirteen men and loads with me, and, what was worse, my monkey-cage and my tin box both seemed far too wide to travel safely on that canoe. But there was no other means available, so we had somehow to devise a method of getting everything across in this little canoe. Two men and two small loads at a time was all the ferry man would risk, and in this way most of my men got across. Then came the real problem. It was difficult enough to wade across the tangled roots and sticky mud without any load or with only a small load, but now we had to get the monkey-cage and my tin trunk from dry land to the canoe. I took the monkeys out and they perched one on each shoulder gibbering hard and obviously frightened. Gradually we got their cage through. It was quite impossible to get it *into* the canoe ; it had to be perched precariously on top. I felt sure it would

tip into the water before reaching the other side, but I was comforted by the knowledge that it would probably float and so not be lost. At first I contemplated having it towed across, but decided against this in order to test the canoe before entrusting my tin trunk, which would certainly *not* float, to the same method of transport. The trunk contained all my photographs of the last eight months and other irreplaceable things, and I did not at all want to see it sink to the bottom of the creek. But the cage went safely across, and the trunk after it, and then I followed with the monkeys. I have seldom felt so relieved as when at last all my kit and men were safely on the far side.

This little incident took nearly three hours, and by the time we were all across, it was dark and we were very hungry. We had covered a quarter of a mile in the time that should have taken us at least nine miles. We camped in the native village and rose next day at 3 a.m. in order to accomplish a much longer march than would otherwise have been necessary and so make up for lost time.

If the path is well defined and the going not too rough, lightly loaded porters can if necessary walk up to forty miles, or even more, in a day. But our path was not well defined and the track was very rough. We managed to do nearly thirty miles, but it was obvious that my porters were not going to be able to stand the pace. So that evening, when we camped in a little village, I inquired if I could get a fresh batch of porters, and finding that I could I decided to pay off those who were with me. One of my original porters, however, decided that he wanted to go right through

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with me. I and my personal servant had of course no alternative, but the other twelve natives were paid off and next morning twelve fresh men took up the loads and off we went once more.

And so, travelling as fast as we could, and changing porters every three or four days, we travelled on.

One of the chief difficulties throughout was the necessity of ferrying across streams and river estuaries. We never again had quite so small a canoe as that of our first experience at the Mbemkuru River, and all was well except for the loss of time, which irked me a great deal.

Another difficulty was that on long stretches of the coastal strip, drinkable water was hard to obtain. Once when we had started at 2 a.m. and had counted on getting water and cooking a meal at a water-hole which some of my porters knew of, we found to our dismay that the hole was completely dry. We had then done twenty-two miles, but there was no alternative but to push on, hungry and thirsty as we were, as hard as we could to the next water-hole, fourteen miles distant. Never have I known fourteen miles seem so long and seldom have I been so tired and thirsty. My poor men could only just stagger along with their loads. On starting out in the early morning we had each had a little water in our water-bottles, but, counting on the water at the place we had been told of, we had not hesitated to drink what we were carrying. In consequence that last fourteen miles had to be marched during the heat of the day without any water at all. And so on and so on.

Once or twice I utterly despaired of getting to Dar-

es-Salaam in time to catch my boat. Just after crossing the mouth of the Rufiji River, where angry hippopotami make the canoe crossing a most frightening business, we were unfortunate in having to march for hours in drenching rain. I was afraid that the soaking would bring out the malaria from which both I and my personal servant had been suffering. If that had happened it would have meant several days' delay and the certainty of missing the boat. My feet, too, were getting very sore and rubbed ; each morning when we started, and every time we set off again after halting for a rest, walking was agony.

In the end we reached Dar-es-Salaam about six hours before the boat sailed, having covered two hundred and sixty-nine miles in twelve and a half days, at a cost only very slightly greater than that I should have had to pay for my passage on the cargo boat.

Of course all foot safaris are not quite like this. Travelling without a time-limit, a foot safari is usually content to cover from twelve to fifteen miles a day, and even at that pace a whole day's rest from time to time is very welcome. To-day I believe there is a car road from Dar-es-Salaam to Lindi, with proper ferries across the rivers and creeks, capable of taking loaded lorries. The journey can be done easily in two days provided the weather is fine. That proviso is one of the greatest drawbacks to a motor safari. Wet weather or even one violent thunderstorm may mean incalculable delay.

Only a few months ago I left Nairobi to motor down that section of the Great North Road of Africa which links Kenya with Tanganyika Territory. Normally

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the journey from Nairobi to Arusha, a distance of a hundred and ninety-two miles, can be accomplished easily in a day; even the slower-travelling lorries not infrequently manage this too. But having a car and a lorry in my safari I decided not to try to get through in a day, and so I started off at 4 o'clock one afternoon, thinking that I should thus easily reach Arusha the following afternoon.

I hate pitching camp in Africa after darkness has set in; it means that the boys have to collect fuel in the dark with the risk of being bitten by snakes which they cannot see until too late. So just before sunset I called a halt and we pitched a tent by the road-side. The sky was cloudless and when we went to bed there was nothing at all to suggest bad weather. Soon after midnight I was awakened by hearing rain beating on the tent, and I had to go out and slacken all the guy ropes and make sure that everything was under cover. At dawn the weather showed no sign of clearing and we had to pack up camp in the rain and start away. The rain had made the earth road very slippery, and we had to put on chains, but that having been done all went well for a while, although of course we had to travel more slowly than we would otherwise have done. After a bit the rain cleared off, and I was beginning to think that all would be well when suddenly the lorry, which I was driving, sank deep into the mud and stopped. At this point the road entered on to a patch of what is commonly called black cotton soil, a type of surface which when wet is very treacherous. We had to jack up the lorry and put stones and branches of trees under the wheels before we could get going again,

and even then progress was painfully slow. For miles ahead of us the road led over this same black cotton soil and it seemed to have rained far more heavily here than elsewhere. Again and again the lorry stuck, and at nightfall we had progressed a bare twelve miles from where we had camped. This was awful. We camped worn out. But the sky was clear and there was a chance that the road would dry a little on the morrow. During the night, however, it rained again, not heavily, but just enough to prevent the wind from having any drying effect, and next morning we faced the sea of mud once more. Almost at once we were in difficulties ; the black cotton soil was here so sticky that it adhered to the wheels of the car in a truly astonishing manner. It is almost incredible, but in the space of fifteen yards the mud had accumulated to such an extent that it had completely clogged the space between the wheels and mudguards and acted as a complete brake. All hands set to work and in about twenty minutes we were able to start again. But in another ten or fifteen yards the same clogging had recurred. And so it went on. After five and a half hours of that awful morning we had just managed to cover a distance of two hundred yards.

I was about to give up the unequal struggle and camp when I succeeded in getting the lorry to move some three hundred yards without a stop. This was so encouraging that I decided to push on and in the next two hours we were able to cover four miles.

After spending five and a half hours in travelling two hundred yards, and then two hours in covering four miles, we suddenly found ourselves travelling smoothly

and easily. We had left the black cotton soil behind us. In another hour we had covered sixteen more miles and arrived at Kajiado, where there is an hotel. The nightmare was over. We got through to Arusha the next day, thus taking a little over three days to cover a distance that usually takes one. We heard subsequently that a car which left Nairobi after we did had a still worse journey, taking five whole days to cover the first fifty miles. It must be remembered that this was not a safari in the blue but a journey down the Great North Road over which next year an International motor race from Algeria to Johannesburg is to be run. Presumably the organizers of the race will choose a season when the road is dry, but even in the dry season heavy thunderstorms occur, and if Jupiter Pluvius sees fit to provide one while the race is on, some sections of the road will quickly become impassable for the time being.

The nightmare journey which I have described above was through the Southern Game Reserve, where lions are very plentiful. But there, as elsewhere, I took no special precautions beyond keeping one hand-lamp burning dimly in case of emergency. Except in places where man-eating lions are known to exist, I do not believe it is necessary—or even wise—to take special precautions to keep lions out of camp. Lions are by nature extraordinarily inquisitive animals, and once darkness has set in they will, in vicinities where safaris are not common, approach anything unusual, such as a camp, in order to see what it is. In places where safaris are common a camp does not interest them much, and of course in places where a great deal of shooting is done a camp serves as a warning of danger.

In olden days—and even to quite a large extent to-day—people made a habit when in lion country of building a thorn fence round their camp. I believe this was, and is, a much more dangerous practice than leaving the camp unfenced. Lions, as I have said, are intensely curious animals and if they see an enclosure with unusual objects inside, they will try, under cover of darkness, to investigate it. It is very hard to build a thorn fence that will keep a lion out if he wants to get in. Sniffing around he will soon find, or make, a gap. Once inside he will proceed, not with any evil intent but simply to satisfy his curiosity, to sniff round and investigate further. Somebody hears the lion and sets up an alarm, pandemonium breaks out and the lion thinks he is trapped. In his hurry to get out he fails to find the gap he entered by. Convinced that he is trapped he attacks his attackers. The incident is subsequently described as a night attack by lions, and the harmless but inquisitive King of Beasts gets a bad name.

In other circumstances I have had trouble with lions, but although I have quite often had lions wandering round, and even through, camp at night, I have never had trouble with them. Leave lions alone and they will leave you alone. The following incident which happened on one of my safaris will serve to illustrate the statement.

After having had exceedingly bad water for several months we camped one evening beside a water-hole where the water, though of an unattractive colour, was excellent in taste. After our meal, which was the first really pleasant one we had had for several months, we

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felt too well fed and content to worry about putting up tents, and just lay down in our blankets beside the lorries. Soon every one was asleep and nothing disturbed our rest till 1 a.m. Then I was suddenly wakened by the sound of ' Shoo, shoo ' and the clapping of hands. Three of my native boys, instead of sleeping with the rest of us, had lain down by the embers of the fire, and the shooing came from them. I called out to ask what was the matter and received the answer that some animal had come sniffing at one of the boys curled up in his blanket, and that he had just shooed it off. I jumped to my feet and hastily switched on the spotlight of the lorry near to which I was sleeping. There, not twenty-five yards from me, and less than fifteen yards from the three boys, were seven magnificent lions. It was one of these that the boy had tried to shoo away with a clap of his hands.

I roused the other members of the party and for some minutes we all watched the animals. Then gradually one by one everybody dropped off to sleep again, with the lions still only twenty-five yards or less away, and I was left, with one other, watching till the lions, too, got bored with staring at us and disappeared beyond the circle of light.

Safari by car and lorry is sometimes a very expensive, as well as a very slow, business. When taking cars and lorries a long way from civilization I always make a point of carrying spares of all the parts likely to go wrong : spare springs, of course, spare clutch linings, and spare parts for the electrical equipment of the machine. But one cannot carry spare parts for every emergency ; if one did there would be no space left for

safari equipment ; one has to risk some things. Once I had the misfortune to break the back axle-hub of a lorry, and although the cost price of the part at Nairobi was under a pound, that hub, by the time I had sent another lorry back two hundred miles to fetch it, cost me very nearly £40. One of the troubles of a car safari, if the objective is at all distant from civilization, is that it is not really safe to travel with one motor only. It is often necessary to take two cars, or a car and lorry, when the amount of kit required for the journey could be carried on one, and this means that the expenses of the safari are doubled. I am not at all sure that in many cases a slow, old-fashioned foot safari is not cheaper and more certain even when cars and lorries can be used.

The chief objection to foot safaris in these days when time is often an important factor which has to be taken into account in reckoning costs, is that they are slow. There are still, however, places in Kenya where a foot safari is quite as quick as a motor safari even when the weather is fine. For instance, not so long ago I wanted to get from one camp of mine to another at about thirty miles distance as the crow flies. To do so by car I should have had to travel about a hundred and thirty miles over very bad roads on which speeding was out of the question, and at the end I should have still been some twelve miles from my destination, which distance I should have had to walk. For a foot safari the nearest practicable route was forty-six miles, but by starting several hours before dawn it was possible to cover the distance in one day.

For this kind of safari—one day long-distance work—it is essential to choose your porters with the greatest

care, and to load them lightly. A part of the march will have to be in darkness but a good native can walk as fast in darkness as in daylight. This sounds reasonable and easy to English people who are accustomed to well-defined and not too narrow footpaths, but it is not so easy on an African footpath. One of the curious things about most Africans is that they walk in such a way that each foot is placed almost exactly in front of the other instead of slightly to one side. As a natural consequence African footpaths are very narrow indeed, and many Europeans find them very difficult to walk along in comfort. Not only this, the paths twist and turn and wind, and on either side of them the ground is often rough and thorny and very hard on bare feet. On such tracks a white man usually has to watch the pathway carefully, but a good African porter does not watch the path but feels it, and so darkness makes no difference to his pace.

I well remember my first few experiences of night marches with Africans along their own narrow paths. Again and again I found myself walking into thorny bushes when the path took a sudden bend. Again and again I stubbed my toe against some hidden obstacle in the direct line of the path I was following, but around which the real path deviated ever so slightly. No native ever stops to remove an obstacle ; he simply walks round it. Even on well-beaten tracks which are used by hundreds of natives every day, if an obstacle such as a branch of a tree falls across the way nobody moves it ; one and all make a detour round it, and soon the by-pass becomes as well marked and feelable as the direct route now blocked by the tree. This method of

feeling the way instead of seeing it can be acquired with practice, and once acquired it obviates entirely the use of artificial light in following a path at night.

It must not be imagined that safaris such as I have described are characteristic of what is nowadays meant by 'going on safari' in Kenya. The meaning of the Swahili word *safari* is a journey or pilgrimage, and I must admit that for me to *safari* to a place means to journey there. But nowadays to 'go on *safari*' is coming to mean to take a camping holiday with the object of enjoying such sports as shooting, fishing and photography, or just sightseeing. Many safaris in Kenya to-day are carried out under such luxurious conditions that they bear no resemblance whatever to the safaris I have described.

I remember once when I was on one of my safaris coming across a car in which two Europeans were seated admiring the view. I stopped to ask if everything was all right (for in Kenya it is an unwritten law that you do not pass a standing car or lorry out in 'the blue' without making the remark 'all right?' thus giving the opportunity to ask for help, to send a message, or to hand over a letter to be posted). Everything was all right ; but these two were talkative, and presently they invited me to their camp for a meal before I proceeded on my way. I agreed and in the course of conversation my new acquaintances remarked that they were having a very cheap *safari* and had come out to Kenya to save money. Imagine my surprise when on reaching the camp I found one lorry fitted up as a travelling kennel for three prize Pekinese dogs, and another as a wine-cellar complete with refrigerating



(Above) A 'ROAD' IN MASAI COUNTRY  
 (Below) MASAI WOMEN CARRYING MILK IN THEIR TRADITIONAL WAY



plant for providing iced drinks ! Everything was done in the most luxurious manner and it caused me much secret amusement to ponder on what would happen to this particular party if fortune left them and they had bad weather and wet roads. The travelling Pekinese dog kennel may have been an unique feature, but it is by no means uncommon to-day to find safaris which include a car fitted up as a refrigerating plant, and of course many carry wireless sets so as not to be cut off from music and from news.

Nowadays the people who make most use of foot safaris are government officials, who have to travel through their administrative areas. There are still many native villages and settlements not accessible by car, and in visiting these the officials have to go on foot. But every year this becomes less and less the case. In the areas inhabited by agricultural tribes like the Kikuyu, the making of a network of roads is definitely in the natives' own interest : the roads form a channel through which their produce finds an outlet to the railway and the towns. We therefore find that the natives of the agricultural areas co-operate for the most part willingly with the administration and the Public Works Department in road-making, and it is by no means unknown for them to make motor roads for their own use.

In the areas occupied by the more backward pastoral peoples, and the less organized semi-agricultural tribes like the Nandi, the situation is very different. To the official in these areas who wants to get about his district quickly, roads are just as desirable as they are elsewhere. But the pastoral peoples and the semi-

agriculturists are not used to doing hard manual labour ; in fact they regard such labour as is entailed in the making and upkeep of roads as very much beneath their dignity. Tribes like the Masai can see very little benefit to themselves in roads. They know, it is true, that roads make it possible for Indian traders to come with their lorries to buy cattle-hides and sell maize-flour and sugar and other commodities ; but experience tells them that these traders will come even if there are no roads. So why build roads which will merely make things easier for the white man and the trader ? If the Government wish to have roads, they argue, let them make them for themselves, with labour imported from other tribes. Quite recently there has been a threat of serious trouble in parts of the country because the Government has been trying to make young men of the pastoral tribes make and keep up roads in their areas.

As one of those whose work often involves safaris in out of the way places I am naturally desirous of seeing more and more roads. As I have shown in this chapter, long tiring foot safaris like the one I made from Lindi to Dar-es-Salaam in 1924 are now seldom necessary. The road where I got stuck so badly with my lorry and car was in Masai country, and if the Masai kept up the roads in their country as some of the agricultural tribes do, the delay would not have occurred.

Nevertheless I can see the problem from the natives' point of view, and appreciate their difficulties. In the next chapter I shall discuss briefly some other problems of administration in Kenya from the natives' point of view.

## V

## ADMINISTRATION AND THE NATIVE

I DO not believe it is an exaggeration to say that the chief cause of friction between the African natives and the Government in Kenya lies in the fact that the members of the administration do not really understand the African point of view. Government officials have a strong sense that they are the trustees and guardians of what they consider to be backward and uncivilized races, and they honestly do their best to improve and develop them. When this involves—as it very often does—the enforcement of some measure, or the taking of some action which the native peoples resent, members of the Government comfort themselves with the idea that what is being done is being done for the natives' own good. If they cannot see it in that light, it is a pity but it cannot be helped. The native must be treated as a child and if his elders and betters—i.e. the white men—think that this or that is for his good then the black man must grin and bear it.

This is all very well in theory, and any one who has had anything to do with children knows that it is sometimes necessary to make them do things which they would rather not. But the Africans are not children.

True, their whole background, their whole culture is different from ours, but the fact that they are different does not make them children and does not justify our treating them as such.

During recent years in Kenya there has been somewhat of a change in policy, a change for the better. Local Native Councils have been organized and given some measure of power. But until there is a better understanding of the black man's point of view and more real co-operation, the deep feeling of distrust which the natives undoubtedly feel towards the Government will continue.

If misunderstandings are the root of most of the friction between Kenya natives and Government officials we ought to try to discover the reasons for these misunderstandings. It is not, I am certain, that the average District Commissioner does not wish to understand the people over whom he has been appointed. Far from it. In all my dealings with members of the Administration I have found a real keenness to know and understand the native point of view.

As far as I can see, the chief trouble is that, except in the coast region—which, after all, forms but a very small part of Kenya—a Government official can seldom speak the language of the people he is dealing with. The official language of Government is Kiswahili, the language of the small coastal minority. It is true that everywhere up-country a few natives can be found who speak and understand Swahili properly, and it is equally true that a much greater number of natives know a few words of Swahili, or at any rate

of that strange ungrammatical corruption of Swahili known locally as 'Kisettler'. But as a result of making Swahili the official language almost every Government official has to perform all his duties through the medium of a language which is foreign both to himself and to his people, except, of course, at the coast.

In his capacity of magistrate, for example, the Government official has to get the evidence of plaintiff, defendant and witnesses through the medium of an interpreter. If the interpreter speaks English it usually means that the evidence passes from the vernacular language in which it was given through the brain of an African native whose knowledge of English and its niceties is very far from adequate to the occasion. More often the evidence has to go through three languages: the native witness having given his evidence in his vernacular, the interpreter translates it into Swahili, and the English official then mentally translates the Swahili into English and writes it down in his note-book.

I have been privileged to be present on several occasions when such a process was employed, and, knowing all three languages, the difference between the original version and final version of the evidence has astonished me. I have again and again heard natives express surprise that on the evidence given in court the magistrate could have come to the decision he did. In a great many cases this undoubtedly happens because the evidence as it finally reaches the Englishman is very different from that actually given.

What causes me most surprise is that often, in spite of the immense difficulties which this method of taking

evidence involves, the magistrate does arrive at a fair decision. I would like my readers to try and consider seriously the extent to which the ends of justice would be served in England if a similar state of affairs obtained. Imagine for a moment that at the Old Bailey all the evidence was given in English by Englishmen, that it was translated into French by a Frenchman whose knowledge of English was far from perfect, and that this translation was then noted down in Turkish by a Turkish judge who was himself by no means a first-class French linguist ! Yet this is the sort of thing that is happening every day in the courts of the District Commissioners in Kenya. Can it be wondered at that misunderstandings are frequent ?

Nor is it only in the courts that this double and treble interpretation goes on. It is employed in every branch of the Administration in Kenya.

Some new scheme, intended to benefit the native community, is about to be put in hand. The District Commissioner holds a 'Baraza', or general meeting of the elders of the tribe, to talk it over. He addresses the meeting in Swahili. Possibly the chief and a few of the elders can understand him, but the mass of those present cannot, and his words have therefore to be translated. As often as not the officer himself finds it very difficult to make his points clear in Swahili, partly because that language probably does not lend itself to a discussion of the matter in hand, and partly because he often does not know Swahili quite well enough to be able to think clearly in it. He therefore has to think his points out in English, then translate them into Swahili, after which they have

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to be further translated—and mutilated in the process—into the vernacular.

Take another case, a chief of some district or other is very concerned, shall we say, about the young men of his tribe. They have been undergoing certain ceremonies which have stirred their blood and he is afraid of trouble. He would like to discuss the matter fully and frankly with the English District officer. Unfortunately neither Swahili nor English possesses words which will adequately convey the meaning of the ceremonies he wishes to discuss. The officer, of course, unless he is quite new to the district, will doubtless have some knowledge of the tribal customs concerned and of a few of the vernacular words connected with them, but he is unlikely really to understand their full significance, and as he does not speak the vernacular tongue fluently, the chief is at a loss to know how to explain his meaning.

‘Why’, my readers will be asking—‘Why do not the District officers learn the language of the people they are living amongst?’ That is a very fair question and one I have asked myself and those responsible on many occasions. In point of fact the position is that nowadays the Government does require its officers to learn the vernacular languages but it very seldom gives them the opportunity of doing so properly. Swahili is still the official language and all officers must pass examinations in it. They begin learning it prior to their appointment, while still undergoing training in England, and they continue to do so after coming out to Kenya, in order to pass the examination upon which the confirmation of their appointment depends.

Thus they have to learn Swahili while performing their duties as junior officers, and this means that their study has to be fitted in to odd hours of the day and evening. Englishmen are notoriously poor linguists, and it is therefore hardly surprising that they usually will not begin studying a vernacular language before they have learnt sufficient Swahili to satisfy their examiners. Having mastered Swahili, which, as I have pointed out, is, though the official language, wholly inadequate for administrative work, one would expect that the officer would begin studying one of the vernacular, up-country languages. As a matter of fact many officers do, although with each succeeding year of service it becomes increasingly difficult for them to find time for such study. But there is a big deterrent. The officer knows that at any moment the news may reach him that he has been transferred to another district where the vernacular will be as different from that which he is starting to learn as English is from Greek, and where the little he has learnt will be utterly useless to him.

Thus, even though a man knows that he could do his work far more efficiently, and far more satisfactorily for all concerned, if he knew the vernacular, he cannot but feel that to learn it is hardly worth the trouble, since next month or next year he may be transferred to an area where a totally different language is spoken and where he will have to start all over again.<sup>1</sup> Nor is the treatment which his fellow officers have received in the service likely to encourage him. He will hear that Mr. X, who happens to be a good linguist.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.

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and learnt Masai quite fluently, has been stationed ever since among tribes who know no word of Masai. Or, while working as junior under Mr. Y, he is told how on his third tour Mr. Y struggled hard with the Kikuyu language and was just beginning to get a working knowledge of it when he was transferred to South Kavirondo, only to go back to Kikuyu when he had forgotten all he had learnt.

I have now explained to my readers why it is that administrative officers can seldom speak the vernacular language of the people they are dealing with, and the question arises naturally, why *those who are responsible* organize things in such a way as to discourage in practice what they encourage in theory? For they do encourage in theory the learning of vernacular languages. They offer a bonus of £50 for every language learnt. They maintain, in perfect sincerity, that the constant changes and transfers which take place are absolutely necessary, and give many reasons in support of their conviction.

It is argued that a young administrative officer in the earlier years of his service should be made to serve in as many districts as possible, and under many different senior officials, in order that his experience may be as varied as possible and that he may gain a general and wide knowledge of the conditions in the country as a whole. Hence it is the rarest thing for a young officer to serve two consecutive years among the same tribe; often he does not even serve the whole of one year in the same district. This argument is all very well and I have no doubt that the experience so gained has some practical value, but I very sincerely

doubt whether the benefits gained can ever counter-balance the benefits lost. A young man in his twenties can, if he really tries, and if he is given time and opportunity, learn a language properly ; but in later years it is infinitely harder for him to do so, partly because as his responsibilities grow greater, he has less and less time, and partly because with advancing years his receptiveness decreases.

Another of the official arguments used in support of the policy of constantly moving administrative officers is that it is in the interests of their health. Some districts and some stations are healthy while others are the reverse, and it is urged that it would be unfair for one man to be sent again and again to a healthy spot while another spends year after year in an unhealthy one. On the face of it this argument is very fair, but I do not believe that it will bear analysis. In the first place, in these days of improved medical services and of increased knowledge of the origin of, and methods of preventing, tropical disease, even the most unhealthy stations are no longer as dangerous as they were. But even if some stations be regarded as definitely unhealthy and others as very healthy, my argument holds good. I do not urge that officers should remain at one single station, but that they should remain *in one language area*. And here I must diverge from my main theme for a moment to discuss the distribution of the language groups.

There are four principal language groups in Kenya. The Nilotic languages, the Central Bantu languages, the Hamitic languages, and the Coastal Bantu languages. Within each of these groups there are many distinct

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tribal languages, but in the main it is true to say that the languages of any two tribes within a single group are so similar that having mastered or partially learnt one of them, the other can be understood to the same extent in the space of a month or so. Thus, for example, knowing Kikuyu fluently as I do, I can understand almost everything that a native of the Kamba or the Teita tribe says to me in the space of a week or two, and if I spent a month or so instead of a week or two, I should not only be able to understand them but also be able to speak to them.

Going back now to the problem of healthy and unhealthy stations, I maintain that if it is necessary to move officers about from one district to another on the score of health, it should still be possible to make these moves without transplanting a man from one language group to another of an entirely different kind. As I have said, the grammar, sentence structure and vocabulary of a group such as the Hamitic is as different from that of the Central Bantu as Greek grammar and structure are from German, and if a man is moved from one language group to another, anything that he has learnt of the one is useless to him in the other area.

Still another argument is put forward by those in authority in support of the practice of moving officers about at frequent intervals. It is said that if a man is kept in one place for any length of time he loses his sense of proportion, and even becomes cranky. This argument can be countered in the same way as the last. If a man must be moved about for any valid reason—and I admit that there are some valid reasons—then at least let him be kept within a single language

group so that he has a chance to learn and to make use of the local vernacular language.

But it is not only the language question that must be taken into consideration in trying to get at the root of the misunderstandings and distrust that exist between the native and the administrative officers. It happens again and again in Kenya that just as an officer is beginning to gain the confidence and trust of the natives under him ; just as he is beginning to understand something of the intricacies of the problems he is faced with ; just, in fact, when he is really becoming useful, he is transferred somewhere else to begin all over again.<sup>1</sup> Or his leave becomes due and he goes home knowing full well that when his leave is over he will be posted to some quite different place. Again and again native friends of mine—Kikuyu, Masai, Jaluo and others—have told me how they wished that the Bwana D.C. (the District Commissioner) were not being moved away, as they were beginning to understand him and he them. Often, too, District officers who have planned some new scheme of improvement in their districts, and who have worked hard to get it going, have confessed to me their wish that they could be reasonably certain of seeing it through.

As a scientist I am a firm believer in team work, and I believe the best way of developing and improving any native district and of really helping the natives concerned, is by closely co-operative team work between the District officer, the Medical officer, the Agricultural officer and the educational bodies who are stationed in any given area. If these people get

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix.

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together and take council with the leading natives of their district and set on foot a genuine scheme of improvement with the co-operation of the natives themselves, then real good can be done. There are, I am glad to say, not a few instances in which this is being done. But at present all such plans of development are liable to sudden death at any moment if the moving spirits of the scheme are transferred one to one new district, and one to another. It is not fair to the natives, it is not fair to the Administrators, it is not fair to the Medical and Agricultural officers ; *I believe it is also unsound economically, politically and in every way.*

In Kenya to-day, demands are heard on every hand for economy. Reductions of salaries and grants are being made and further cuts are being demanded from the Government. Before any reduction in the numbers of the Administrative officers is effected, a serious attempt should be made to economize in other ways ; as it is, there are barely enough administrative officers to do the necessary work. But some saving of money (I am not in a position to estimate how much) could be achieved by reducing transfers to minimum. At present it not infrequently happens that when one officer goes home on leave, his departure becomes the excuse for a re-shuffle involving half a dozen or more transfers. Mr. X goes on leave from, shall we say, Kisii ; Mr. Y, who is at the time stationed at Kiambu—and who is in the middle of investigating an intricate and problem there—is moved to Kisii to take Mr. X's place. Mr. A is brought in from Masai country to replace Mr. Y at Kiambu, and inci-

dentially has to start all over again before he can get an understanding of the land problem that Mr. Y was investigating. Mr. A's junior, Mr. B, who has been in the service some time and is due for promotion, takes over Mr. A's job ; but that means that he must have a new junior officer under him. There is a young cadet due to arrive at Mombasa on his first tour but it is thought inadvisable to put him under a man who is about to undertake a senior officer's duties for the first time. So a young officer at present at Fort Hall is moved to Masai country, a man from Mombasa goes to take his place at Fort Hall, and the young cadet who has come out from England lands at Mombasa to take over the duties of the man who has gone to Fort Hall. All these moves—and possibly a good many more—just because Mr. X who was at Kisii was due for six months leave in England !<sup>1</sup> And every move involves the expenditure of funds to take the moving officer's furniture and possessions to his new station ; every move probably means that the man taking over the new station has to duplicate a lot of the work done by his predecessor before he can really start doing anything of value of his own ; and almost certainly every move means fresh misunderstandings.

As a joint result of failure on the part of government officers to know the vernacular of the tribe they are administering, and of the authorities' policy of constantly transferring the officers (which is itself responsible for the language failure), it is but seldom that a District officer has more than a superficial knowledge of the tribal customs of his people, and this, as can be

<sup>1</sup> *This is a purely hypothetical case, but see Appendix.*

imagined, cannot but intensify the misunderstandings between black and white men.

And here a very real and fresh difficulty comes into the picture. I have already shown that as far as language is concerned an officer can easily be moved not only from one station to another within the boundaries of the same tribe, but even to a station in a quite different tribe, without involving him in any real language difficulties, provided he is kept within the area of the same language group. Unfortunately it does not follow that two tribes whose languages are very similar have the same degree of similarity in their tribal customs. On the contrary, it is by no means uncommon to find within a single tribe, all of whose members speak an identical language, separate sections with difference in tribal customs which are fundamental in importance.

For instance, if an officer with considerable experience of the natives living in the Nyeri district of the Kikuyu country were to be moved to the Kiambu district of the same tribe, he would find that the differences in custom and native law were considerable. And if by any chance he tried to administer justice in a land dispute in Kiambu upon the basis of his knowledge of Kikuyu land law as it exists in Nyeri, he would undoubtedly come to most unjust decisions.

And there is another very real danger in connexion with the native tribal customs. At each District Station there is kept a book in which successive officers make notes upon native law and custom and so on. There are also kept the records of old cases that have been tried at the station. Now, as I have pointed out

already, these notes before they get entered in the book have often passed through several interpretations from one language to another, and they are often very far from accurate. Similarly, in the record book in which officers make notes of tribal law and customs, much of the information consists of inaccurate half-truths, distorted by multi-interpretation. Yet it is only fair to say that *some* of the notes and records in these books are very accurate. Unfortunately, however, when a new man takes over a station he has no means of knowing which of the notes represent accurate information and which inaccurate. There are possible remedies for this state of affairs, as for example the organization of a series of prolonged and detailed anthropological studies, but I will not enlarge upon them here, for I intend discussing the matter in the chapter on science and the African.

It is in connexion with their land that the natives of Kenya distrust the Government most, and it is over land questions that the greatest misunderstandings have arisen and will always arise. There can be no denying that tribes like the Kikuyu have in the past been most unjustly treated. Many promises made in all sincerity by officials of one régime have been broken by others at a later date. The natives have been assured again and again that their Reserves as at present demarcated will never be encroached upon, but they still have a haunting fear. How can they be sure that this pledge, too, will not be broken?

Although the vast majority of the natives of Kenya are still in the state which I described at the beginning of this chapter, knowing no language but their own,

it must be remembered that a small proportion are well educated, understand English perfectly, read the newspapers and especially the political news regularly, and pass on the information gleaned to their less educated tribesmen. Thus, very many of the Africans of Kenya are aware that the settlers of Kenya are once again talking about what they are pleased to call the 'Control of the Government of this country by the people themselves'. They know quite well that 'by the people themselves' the settlers mean 'by the white people themselves', and that the three million Africans would have no part in the government. They are genuinely afraid of the day when the settlers shall attain a measure of self-government, for it is the settlers who are the owners of lands which were formerly African, and who again and again in public speeches and in letters to the press have revealed their desire for more and more of those fertile lands in the highlands of Kenya, which still remain to the African.

Among the many Government officials whom I know personally, I regret to say that there are very few who seem to understand the real attitude of the African, and more especially the agricultural African, to his land. Let me give an example of this.

The lands of certain sections of the Kikuyu tribe are to-day populated at a density of about 500 to the square mile; a large part of their land is populated at over two hundred and fifty to the square mile; but in a few parts the figure is much lower. Where the density is over two hundred and fifty to the square mile there is a continual complaint that there is no room to expand, no room to grow more than just the bare

necessities of life and to graze stock. In discussing this with me, an official, who had had long experience of the Kikuyu and who certainly might have been expected to know better, voiced the opinion that if the natives were overcrowded in one part of the Kikuyu Reserve, they had better go and take some of the land in the less crowded areas. He, like so many Government officials, still cherished the notion that land was communal and that all a man in need of land had to do was to find an unoccupied district (but of course it would have to be in the area 'reserved' for his tribe) and occupy it.

No conception of native ideas concerning land could be farther from the truth. Long before we came on to the scenes, every acre of land in South Kikuyu was owned by an individual family. Even in the areas where the density of the population is not so very great, there is no land that a stranger can just walk into and occupy. You might as well suggest that any Englishman wishing to start farming in Kenya could go into the areas which are to-day owned by the Europeans of Kenya and simply for his own take the first bit of undeveloped land he came across !

I do not intend to enlarge upon the laws of native land tenure in this book, as I shall be dealing with them fully in another, but it is no exaggeration to say that those laws are highly organized, very complex, and differ so widely from tribe to tribe that it is very dangerous indeed to apply the knowledge of them gained in one area to another.

If misunderstandings over land questions are the most serious in the dealings of Government and native

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Africa, they only just take precedence over misunderstandings concerning Africans and their cattle and sheep and goats.

Again and again I have heard members of the Administration express views on the subject that reveal the greatest lack of insight and real knowledge. Many an official still holds the view that Africans merely accumulate cattle, goats and sheep as a form of wealth, and that the animals have little other significance. Many officials hold obstinately to the false belief that to an African one goat is as good as another, that a thin ox in bad condition is as good as a fat and healthy one, and that, in fact, a goat or an ox is rather like a banknote whose face value remains the same even when it is torn and ragged and old. It is astonishing that this should ever have been believed, and still more astonishing that it should be so hard to dispel.

I do not of course deny that the number of a man's animals forms a sort of outward and visible sign of his wealth, nor do I deny that the commonest way in which an African invests any money that he obtains is in stock. But after all, when an Englishman has any money to spare he invests it in whatever way he considers most likely to bring him in the highest rate of interest. And the simile can be carried farther. Often one hears the surprise expressed by a Government official at the unwillingness of a native to part with a goat or an ox to pay his taxes or to settle a debt. Again and again, and among some tribes more than among others, a native will borrow money in order to pay a tax or a fine, rather than part with an animal from his herd. Do not most Englishmen act in exactly

the same way ? Who would not rather borrow on the security of his invested capital, than sell out and utilize the capital itself ?

Certainly to the native his stock represents his invested capital, his wealth, but it has many other significances connected with his religion and his social life as well, while in tribes like the Masai, stock is practically the only source of daily food.

Let me give one example of a very serious misunderstanding in connexion with stock. The Masai tribe are purely pastoral, and each family possesses an immense herd of cattle. If such a herd is examined it will be found that besides bulls, cows and heifers, there are a very large number of bullocks. To the average Englishman in Kenya and to most Government officials, bullocks can only have two uses : as draught animals for ploughs, ox-wagons, &c., and for slaughter. Masai bullocks are of course never used by their owners for the former purpose, and there appear to be far more of them than are necessary for slaughtering purposes. So the conclusion is reached that they are useless, uneconomic animals, eating up the pasture, serving no purpose beyond the satisfaction of the desire to accumulate wealth.

In many parts of Masai country the scarcity of water in the dry season is a very serious problem. In many places there is, too, a danger of harmful soil erosion being brought about by over-grazing. And so the Government, as Trustees of the African, with a real desire to help the Masai, and with as real a failure to appreciate the true position, argue something like this : ' This over-grazing must be stopped, or much

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of Masai country will be ruined. The natives do not realize the danger themselves. The obvious cause of the over-grazing is the existence of all these uneconomic bullocks of theirs. In their interests we must take measures to reduce drastically the numbers of these.'

What is the true position? As I see it, it is this. The bullock is emphatically not the useless, 'uneconomic' animal he is believed to be, and nobody who had lived in close and intimate contact with the Masai day and night could possibly think so. The Masai food supply consists of milk and meat and blood. Not blood that has been obtained from an animal after it has been slaughtered, but blood obtained at regular intervals from living animals. Just as a cow is regularly milked, so an ox is regularly bled, to provide food for its owners and the family. But whereas a cow in milk can be milked twice a day, an ox if it is to remain healthy can only be bled at intervals of from five to six weeks. For a family of five or six, the blood of two oxen will provide a meal, and a herd of about eighty will be required if the beasts are to be kept healthy. Actually the population of an average Masai boma or kraal is often in the neighbourhood of 20 or 30 adults, so that a very much larger number of bullocks is needed to keep up the daily food supply. It is hardly surprising therefore, to find the herd belonging to such a kraal running to several hundred head, a very large proportion of which consists of the so-called uneconomic bullocks, which the Government would like to see drastically reduced in numbers. If such a policy were blindly enforced there could only be one result: Famine.

If it is true that Masai country is in danger of being seriously over-grazed and thus becoming subject to soil erosion, the remedy must be looked for elsewhere. I have already mentioned the Game Reserve in another chapter. A very large part of the Masai Reserve is one and the same as the Southern Game Reserve, while much of the remaining Masai territory is the home of other vast herds of game animals and is thus the happy hunting ground of Kenya's sportsmen. Any one who has experience of stock farming in Kenya knows the damage done to grazing by herds of zebra, wildebeeste and kongoni. In areas which have been allocated to European stock farmers, hundreds and thousands of these animals have been destroyed so that the grazing may be preserved for the white man's stock. Surely, then, if the Masai Reserve is in serious danger of being over-grazed, the first remedy should be the drastic reduction of the wild animals, for *why* should European-owned stock take precedence over game animals, if game animals take precedence over native-owned stock ?

Even if it were true that the Masai oxen merely represent so much wealth and are not of any economic value, it is hard to see how the Government as Trustees could be justified in the 'drastic cutting down' of the wealth of their wards. Are not the vast herds of dairy stock of European farmers, and his flocks of wool-bearing sheep, his wealth ? And would he tolerate the drastic cutting of these herds in order to stop the over-grazing of his land, when, and if, *he knew quite well that the real cause of over-grazing was the numbers of zebra, &c. that shared his land* ? The bleaching skulls

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of countless zebra which were to be seen round Lake Naivasha and elsewhere some years ago, and which are still to be seen to-day on the Kinangop plateau and in other places, bear silent witness that the answer is NO.

I could go on giving examples of the misunderstandings between the Administration and the native indefinitely, and the really sad thing is that these misunderstandings are most of them so utterly unnecessary and so unintentional. Not all of them are of serious consequence, and some are tinged with humour, as the following story which arose out of an official's desire to maintain the 'white man's prestige', shows.

Once I went to stay for a day or two with a friend of mine who was then a District Commissioner at one of the stations in the Kikuyu Reserve. I was given a room very near the kitchen, and in the evening I overheard the following conversation between one of my own native servants and one of my host's.

*My boy* : 'What sort of a Bwana (master) is yours ? '

*His boy* : 'A very good master. He loves the Kikuyu, and he is very fair. But there is one bad thing : he is such a coward.'

This remark staggered me, for I knew my friend to be one of the bravest men I had ever met, fearless almost to the point of foolhardiness. The conversation went on.

'A coward is he ? How is he a coward ? '

'Well, he is all right in daylight, but do you know that after dark if he wants to go across to the house of the Bwana Doetori he won't go alone although it is so close. No, he calls to one of us to bring a lamp,

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and we have to take him over, and wait and bring him back. Yes, he is certainly a coward.'

Next day I spoke to my friend, as I was sure that no fear or cowardice was responsible for the escort or the lamp. 'Well,' he said, 'I had never seen it in the light of what you have just told me. I take a boy and a lamp simply as a matter of keeping up the white man's prestige. I thought that my boys and the natives on the station would think it unseemly that I, the Bwana Mkubwa—the representative of the Government should go unattended.'

What a failure to understand the black man's point of view ! What a sorry misunderstanding of the tribe he was living amongst, that could make the servants of one of the bravest men in Kenya dub him a coward, when he was seeking to uphold the prestige of his race !

## VI

### THE MISSIONARY AND THE AFRICAN

IN KENYA to-day the various Missionary Societies are responsible for nearly all the educational work among the Africans, and also for a very great deal of the medical work. It is not, however, those aspects of missionary work that I am going to discuss here, for they are of but secondary importance in the eyes of the missionaries themselves, whose main object is to convert the native to Christianity and so to save his soul.

All the Christian missions are united together by this bond—the belief that Christianity is the only religion that can save the soul—but each denomination has its own interpretation of what Christianity means. To the Church of England man or woman it means a belief in all the doctrines and dogmas, the customs and teachings that have grown up and been incorporated in Christianity as practised by themselves. To the Nonconformist it has a simpler meaning, less encumbered by doctrine and dogma, but still incorporating much that is not so much Christian teaching as English social custom, and so on. In fact, each Missionary Society representing a different Christian sect puts its own special meaning upon Christianity,

and each includes in that meaning much that, as I see it, goes beyond the simple original teachings of the Founder of their religion. Before we can discuss any of the problems that have inevitably arisen as a result of the activities of the Missionary Societies in Kenya, it is essential that we should know something of the beliefs and practices of the natives whom the missionaries are trying to convert. I cannot, of course, give a full and detailed account of these, nor is it my purpose to do so, but certain facts must be clearly understood.

Of all the tribes of Kenya it is fair to say that their religious beliefs and practices are so completely interwoven with their social organization that it is very hard to say where religion begins and social custom ends.

In his 'heathen' state almost every African believes in a deity of some sort, a supreme and distant being who takes but little interest in individuals, but who was the creator of the world and is the giver of essential things like rain. Besides the supreme deity there are spirits of many kinds, some of whom are almost regarded as lesser deities, but who for the most part correspond in a vague way to the Roman Catholic conception of saints and angels. Among the majority of tribes the most powerful spirits are those of departed ancestors, and these are believed to take a very real interest in the lives of individuals.

In almost every tribe, too, sacrifice plays a very important part in religion, and in some the sacrificial practices and beliefs might almost have been derived straight from the Old Testament. In fact, the natives of Kenya have beliefs which correspond very closely

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to those of Old Testament times, and the similarity does not end with religious beliefs. Polygamy is everywhere to be found, as well as such customs as 'raising up seed by a deceased brother's wife', and the putting to death of witches.

Among all the tribes, too, in Kenya there exists the custom which the uninformed call the 'buying of wives', a custom which involves the handing over of certain possessions by the family of the bridegroom to that of the bride; yet it is certainly not buying in the ordinary sense of the word, any more than marriage settlements and dowries can be regarded as 'buying' in European countries.

When the early missionaries arrived in Kenya to preach Christianity they quite rightly realized that it was essential to have a knowledge of the language of the people. Thus each missionary started to learn the language of the district in which he was to work, and as soon as possible the missionaries began to translate parts of the Bible into the languages of Kenya.

The policy of using the vernacular is, of course, essential to successful missionary enterprise, and in order to make it possible the missionary societies very seldom transfer a man from one tribe to another. Moreover, the value of the friendship and trust which grows out of long contact is appreciated, and, with few exceptions, a man is allowed to return tour after tour to the same mission station, where the people have learnt to trust him.

As I have already said, among African tribes religion and social custom are so interwoven that it is very hard to say where one begins and the other ends.

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It was therefore bound to happen that the early missionaries, who had come out to teach a new religion to replace the old native religions, should regard almost all tribal custom as wrong and wicked, and should preach that those who accepted Christianity must renounce all such customs. It was only natural, too, that the many English social customs which are so closely linked with Christianity should be handed on to the African converts. In fact I fancy that in the minds of most early missionaries the identity of English social custom and Christianity was so close that they did not even realize that they were passing on anything but pure Christianity. Example is stronger than precept, and the missionaries were Christians and therefore to the African mind in those early days everything which the missionary did was part and parcel of his Christianity, and essentially Christian. The missionary wore clothes and boots and a hat, the native convert did the same as soon as he could. The missionary could read and write, and the convert also learnt to do so. If everything the missionary did was essentially Christian then the converse must be true, the things that the missionary did not do must be un-Christian. But here difficulties arose. How were the natives to know what the missionary did not do? Of course there were a good many things that the missionary spoke against in sermons and in instruction classes. Obviously these things, lying, stealing, murder, adultery, &c., were un-Christian, but most of them were things that the native himself thought of as wrong. But there were other things like polygamy and circumcision rites and

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sacrifices which the missionary also attacked, things which had the age-old sanction of tribal custom. If the missionary said they were un-Christian they must be given up, but it followed surely that anything in tribal custom which was not specifically attacked must be all right. This view led to some very serious situations and some curious problems.

In the customs of any Kenya tribe there were, and are, many things which the missionary would have condemned if he had known of them ; but as he did not know of them he did not condemn them. Similarly there were customs which he knew of and which he believed that he had condemned, when in fact he had done nothing of the sort. In short, very serious misunderstandings arose. Let me give an example from the tribe I know best, the Kikuyu.

Sex plays a very important part in the life of the Kikuyu, as it does in any other African tribe, and in consequence the Kikuyu have a great variety of words which deal with sexual activities, each word having a very special significance. To the Christian missionary the seventh commandment, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery' has not a special but a general meaning. Adultery means for the missionary any sexual activity outside the marriage bond. In translating this commandment into the Kikuyu language, a word was used that only means adultery in its most restricted sense, the taking of another man's wife against his will. Now the Kikuyu have a custom which ordains that if a man visits the home of a friend who is of the same age group as himself, he may sleep with his friend's wife if she is agreeable. This is not adultery at all,

and this relationship is certainly not covered by the word used in translating the seventh commandment. Either in ignorance that the custom existed, or else believing that it was covered by the word employed, the missionaries did not specifically oppose this custom for many years. I am therefore certain in my own mind that the many Christian Africans who continued to practise it did so in absolute good faith, not only unaware that it was un-Christian, but even firmly believing that it was a custom practised by the missionaries themselves !

Similarly with many other customs of a like nature. Once a marriage has been arranged, and certain of the preliminary negotiations between the two families have been ratified, it is expected, among many tribes, that the prospective bride and bridegroom should sleep together, and no attempt to complete the transaction will take place until a child is on its way. (After all such a custom is by no means unknown among the small fishing communities of outlying villages on the South coast of England.) I shall never forget being present at an interview when a highly respected native teacher and preacher was summoned before a missionary who had discovered that the girl whom the teacher was going to marry was with child. Was it true that the girl was going to have a baby ? Yes, it was true. Was he the father of the child ? Yes, certainly, who else ? How could he, the leader of the little Christian community, who preached regularly on Sundays, how could he stand and admit that and not be ashamed ? Did he not know that it was wicked and sinful ? Did he not see the harm he had done to

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Christianity? Did he not know what a hypocrite he had been, standing up in church preaching Sunday by Sunday, when he had done this thing? How had he dared to ask for his wedding to take place in church soon, quite soon now, when he knew how he had behaved? The missionary paused. The teacher very gently said that he was truly sorry, but he had not known that what he had done was wrong.

At that the missionary lost his temper. Had he not known indeed? Must he make his sin the worse by lying like that, by making such a feeble excuse as that, he a teacher and a preacher, baptized ten years ago, a regular communicant! Had not known indeed! The missionary paused again. No, master, I did not know, I did not know. The poor man who was as real and as sincere a Christian as I have ever known, broke down. The missionary announced that he would be excommunicated for six months, and that he would be required next Sunday to stand up publicly before the congregation and confess his sin.

And so through the bitter experience of their teacher, the congregation learnt that one more of their ancient customs was un-Christian, and the missionary, believing to the end that the man had sinned deliberately, marvelled at his unashamedness.

In the early days the native converts to Christianity had no knowledge of the Bible except what they got direct from the missionary, but as they have become more and more civilized, and as the Bible has been gradually translated into their own languages, this state of affairs has passed. Some of them can read the Bible in English, others in Swahili—into which

language it was very early translated—and nowadays more and more of the Bible is available to them in their own languages.

This has meant that many new problems have arisen. From the earliest days it was taught that polygamy was un-Christian, but soon it was found that Abraham and David and many others who were held up as Godly men had more than one wife. The missionaries were asked about this and they are still being asked. Yes, it was true that these Old Testament people had many wives, but that was before Christ had been born. He had changed things. No, He had not stated in so many words that polygamy was sinful, but His teachings implied it, and the Church had laid it down : they must obey the Church. Some are content to do so, others are not, and problems that are really very serious are arising from this situation now, problems that have got to be faced by the missionaries of the present day.

In almost every tribe in Kenya there are rather more women than men, and although only a small percentage of men have more than one wife, the fact of polygamy means that every woman can have a husband. To the African woman there is nothing more terrible than the idea of being unmarried, childless and a virgin all her life. The only honourable occupation for a woman is still that of marriage and the bearing of children, and this is as true of Christian girls as of others. Every African girl would prefer to be the first, and possibly the only, wife of a man. But if that is impossible, better for her to be a second wife than to remain a spinster, a virgin for all time.

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What then is to happen to the Christian girl who cannot find a man who will marry her as his one and only wife? The missionary answers that she must remain unmarried, must repress her sexual urge and must live a virgin as many European Christian women do. What actually happens? The problem is only just becoming acute, for hitherto there have been more Christian boys than Christian girls, but now that is changing.

Some of the Christian girls who cannot find a husband discover in the end that they cannot any longer suppress their natural desires, their urge towards motherhood. It is not that they have any desire to give up Christianity, but they must do something. Some of them become the second wives of what the missionaries call 'back-sliding Christians'. Some of them take secret lovers, and add to their so-called sin of illicit sex, the sin of deceit. Others again in desperation go to the big towns and become concubines and prostitutes. Few, if any, remain virgins, and if they do, the risk of mental derangement due to repressed sex is very great. Here is a very real problem that the missionaries have got to face. Which of the four alternatives is the best? Which the most Christian?

If conditions for the African girl were the same as those in England most of the missionaries, probably all of them, would say that the last was the best. In England where all kinds of interests and activities can serve as an outlet, and where anyhow the sex desire of many women is not so great, the fourth alternative is possible, and the risk of indefinite repression causing mental derangement is comparatively small.

Possibly, nay probably, the time will come in Kenya when similar outlets will be available for the Christian African girl who cannot find a monogamist husband, but for the moment the problem is there. Some missionaries prefer not to face it, prefer to let things slide, advising the impossible, knowing that it is impossible, and then blaming those who fail. This behaviour is unworthy of Christianity. Of the three alternatives, prostitution, secret lovers and second wife of a Christian man, surely the third is best. Is open and honest polygamy really un-Christian? Or is it merely contrary to a British social custom which has become identified with Christianity?

Another serious problem for the Kenya missionary is that of birth control. Among many, though not all, of the tribes in Kenya tribal law and custom ordains that a woman must not conceive a second child until the previous one has been weaned. And as the African children are seldom weaned before they are over a year old, the children of an African woman of these tribes are spaced at intervals of two and a half years, and sometimes more.

Among the tribes where this custom is practised the reasons are given and they are very sound. It is held that a woman who is pregnant cannot possibly give adequate care and attention to a small infant, and that if a second child is allowed to start before the first is weaned, the strain will be too great and both the born and unborn child will suffer.

Those who have seen the worn and haggard looks of the working-class woman in England who have unrestricted families will admit at once the wisdom of

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the African law and custom, and they will even wish that it could be made compulsory in the slums. Meanwhile in Kenya Christianity is rapidly breaking down this custom. Missionaries are conservative Christians as a whole, men and women who believe that the main, if not sole, object of sex in marriage is the 'procreation of children', and that the limitation of the family should be left in the hands of the Deity.

In consequence it is possible to find to-day wives of African Christians with far more children than they can possibly manage to look after in addition to their husbands' homes and gardens. Such a state of affairs is due to the idea that because the 'heathen' religion was considered to be bad and has been replaced by the Christian one, all the customs must also have been bad and must be swept away.

As the Christian religion has spread in Kenya the missionaries have more and more taken the Africans into their confidence, and on almost every mission station to-day there is a council of church elders, whose function is to help and advise the missionary in the conduct of the affairs of the church, and in the solution of problems such as those I have been discussing.

These church elders consist almost entirely of men whose youth was spent at the mission station in the days when the numbers attending the missions were much smaller than they are to-day, so that each individual came into much closer contact with the missionary. Their outlook on religion was formed at a time when any one who went to the mission was bitterly persecuted by his 'heathen' relations. For them anything that the missionary declared to be un-Chris-

tian was un-Christian, and as I have pointed out already if they did things that were un-Christian it was not in defiance but in ignorance.

As church elders to-day it is hardly surprising to find that these people are narrow and bigoted in the extreme. Younger missionaries who have had some anthropological training in England before coming out to the mission field feel keenly that some of the old native customs are perhaps not as bad as some of the earlier missionaries made out, and they wish to try and incorporate some of them into the social life of the mission community. They seek the advice of the church elders, expecting sympathetic support, but, as often as not, they do not get it. It has become so firmly fixed in their minds that all of the ancient customs are bad, that they cannot even give serious consideration to them.

Again let us take an example from the Kikuyu. At, or about, the time of puberty every boy and girl went through an initiation ceremony which was the outward and visible sign of the passage from childhood to the status of an adult. Without going into full details let us briefly summarize what this initiation meant. It was necessary that young men and women should know the tribal laws and customs about sex. They must not only know the facts of sex and the dangers involved in its misuse, but they must know just what the society in which they were going to live allowed and what it frowned upon.

With the putting away of childhood too they must put away childish things and realize their responsibilities to the community. The period of initiation

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was in fact a period of education and instruction into general behaviour and also sexual behaviour, but it was more than that. All the boys and girls initiated at the same time were members of the same age group and were taught that failure to observe the laws and customs of their tribe meant not only disgrace to themselves but to their age group. This gave a very valuable 'group loyalty' and meant that each individual had the added strength of the 'group mind' to help him if he was tempted to break the laws of the tribe.

Of course much of the teaching that was given at initiation was quite incompatible with Christianity, and this fact, together with the idea that all native customs must be 'heathen' and bad, meant that initiation ceremonies were condemned by the missionaries. But without going through initiation no boy or girl could be considered an adult member of the tribe, could marry, or could enjoy the privileges of tribal membership, and in consequence young men and girls who had come to the mission station before puberty and initiation frequently temporarily left in order that they might undergo the rites. Others discovered that it was the teaching given at initiation that the missionaries objected to most, so in some cases a very restricted form of initiation was invented for the mission boys and girls. In the end the whole matter came to a head in Kikuyu country and it nearly ended in the disruption of the missions, and might have done so but for the partial withdrawal of their attitude by some of the missionaries concerned.

To-day some of the younger missionaries feel that

if they could organize a new Christian form of the initiation ceremony, they might incorporate in it all that was good in the old ceremony and much that was new and essentially Christian as well. Such an idea seems to me excellent, but now it has the opposition of many of the church elders of the various missions, who are so instilled with the idea that initiation is wicked that they cannot see that parts of the old custom were good.

If such an idea of a new ceremony of 'Christian initiation' could be developed and worked out it would undoubtedly be of great value. If sound sex teaching and hygiene and the Christian moral code (possibly modified in certain things) were made the basis of the instruction given, then the young boys and girls who went through the initiation together would all help each other to keep the 'laws and customs' thus imparted to them. The old feelings of group loyalty would come into play once more. Some such policy as this is becoming very urgent indeed in the missions in Kenya to-day.

Already as a result of the teaching of the earlier missionaries (who cannot be blamed for what after all was the normal attitude of their day), there is growing up among the mission Africans a sort of 'hush-hush' attitude towards sex, instead of the frankness of the olden days. Girls and boys are growing up on mission stations with so little knowledge of the facts of life and so little teaching about sexual behaviour and hygiene that they are having to glean what they can, when and where they can. In fact they are going back to a state more dangerous to them-

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selves, to the community and to Christianity than they would be in if the old 'heathen' initiation rites were still allowed.

So far in this chapter I have not discussed whether missionary work in Kenya is good or bad. It is a *fait accompli*. There are some Europeans in Kenya who would like to see all missionary work among the Africans stopped. Others again who say that missionary work should be confined to education and medical service, and that the African's own religion is good enough for him. There are still others who would have missionary activity confined to religious teaching.

None of these attitudes takes the full facts of the situation into account. For good or for evil the white man has come to Kenya, has come into violent contact with the black man. The religion of the white man is Christianity, and quite apart from any other consideration, that is enough to make the African want to know about Christianity. Whether we like it or whether we do not, the very fact of the impact of our civilization means that the religious beliefs of the Africans have received a severe shock.

The African is essentially a religious person, he must have religion of some sort, and I, for one, am convinced that he should be given Christianity rather than Mahommedanism. By Christianity I mean essential Christianity and not all the British social custom that is linked on to it, but which is not an essential part of it.

Those who suggest that missionary societies should confine themselves to education and medical work argue that the African's own religion is good enough

for him. They forget that when it is in contact with European civilization that religion cannot really stand : for African religion is essentially based on a communal form of life which is being disrupted by economic pressure. Religion was mainly a family affair, and most of the sacrificial ceremonies could not be held unless all the male members of the family were present. The religious unit was the family, linked together by the bond of common deceased ancestors, whose spirits were to be propitiated, and not, as in the case of Christianity, a group of people unrelated and unconnected, and possibly of different tribes and races, linked together only by a common spiritual Father, and His doctrines.

Those people who would have missionaries leave religion on one side forget too the all-important fact that missionaries only exist because they believe that their religion is the best, and because they have come out to obey the command ' Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel '. The very fact that they are willing to do educational and medical work for such small salaries, and often under such difficult conditions, is simply because of the opportunities they thus get of preaching the Gospel.

Those who would like to see the missionaries confine their activities entirely to religious instruction, are echoing the desires of many missionaries themselves. But if the full benefit of Christianity is to be reaped by the converts the missionaries must give them some education so that they can read the Bible for themselves ; and if some education is to be given, why not more ? As to medical work, how can any

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Christian fail to put such medical knowledge he or she has at the disposal of those who need it?

Of all the Europeans living in Kenya there can be no doubt at all that the missionaries are the ones who are the most trusted and most loved by the Africans, 'heathen' and Christian alike.

The 'heathen' native knows that the missionary is devoting all his time and energy to helping the black man, and if he does this he must be a friend. When a man or woman is sick, if the missionary is called in he will come and help in every way possible, even if the sick person is a well-known enemy of the mission. The missionary thinks not of himself (unless he is a very bad missionary), but only of how he can help others, and all day and every day the natives know that they can go with their troubles and difficulties and be helped; for in Kenya the missionaries have always been champions of the natives.

## VII

### THE SETTLER AND THE AFRICAN

THERE ARE so many more settlers in Kenya than there are Government officials or missionaries, that it is difficult to give a generalized picture of the relations between the settler and the African. A very large proportion of settlers treat the natives with whom they come into contact with fairness and much kindness, and as individuals they are in consequence liked and respected. This is born out by the fact that many settlers have the same native servants and workmen in their employ year after year. A few settlers treat their African employees harshly and unfairly, and are naturally hated for it, with a hatred that is accentuated by the difference of colour. But it is important to remember that the feelings of individual natives for individual settlers is a quite different thing from the attitude of the natives of Kenya as a whole to the settler community as a whole.

In my own experience I think it is fair to say that as a whole the settler community is disliked and certainly distrusted by the African. Nor is this surprising, for, after all, in spite of all that the settlers and politicians may say, the interests of the African and the settler are very conflicting indeed. The whole position is a complex one. First of all let us look at it

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from the settlers' point of view, and after that we will examine it from the Africans' standpoint.

As the settler sees it Kenya was a country where vast stretches of land were not being utilized to the full before the coming of the white settler, who was of course given every encouragement to emigrate by the Government. All sorts of inducements were held out, land was cheap, labour was both cheap and plentiful, the climate pleasant, taxation low, the cost of living low, and so the settlers came.

The land taken up was put at their disposal by the Government and if that land was in fact native land, then the grievance of the African should be against the Government and not against the settler.

By coming to Kenya the settler has brought money to the country, and much of this money has gone to pay wages to the African in the course of developing farm lands. By settling in Kenya the settler feels that he has benefited the African a great deal. Has he not given him the opportunity of learning advanced forms of agriculture? Has he not introduced all sorts of crops that the African never knew before, but which he is now beginning to plant? Has he not given him a permanent labour market, which enables him to earn money to pay his taxes? Not only that, the settler argues, and argues truly, he has provided a market for all sorts of things which the natives themselves produce. Very many settlers, too, provide medical help for the natives, and some (but not so many) provide schools on their farms for the natives they employ.

From the settlers' point of view then, the Africans

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have gained a deal through their presence, and the Africans ought to be duly thankful. Some settlers would add that the African owes the existence of *pax Britannica* to the settlers too, but that of course is not true. The Government brought *pax Britannica* to the country when it took over what is now Kenya Colony as a Protectorate, and if all the settlers went away to-morrow it would remain as long as the Government remained.

But what is the Native point of view?

Although there are other reasons why the Africans dislike and distrust the settlers as a whole, the most important ones are connected with land. Although it may be true that it was the Government that gave the land to the settlers and that therefore any blame should be on the Government, the natives know that it is the settler who is in possession of the land, and that if there had been no settlers very little land would have been taken from them. Not all the tribes have suffered equally in this matter of land, and among the tribes who had no land taken from them at all, the feeling against the settlers is not nearly so strong; although they are haunted by the fear that one day the settlers will demand more land.

Of all the tribes the Kikuyu probably suffered the most and they are the most bitter. Their land was near Nairobi, near the railway, and what was more important still it was very fertile and in a healthy area.

The Carter Commission which recently investigated the whole question of land in Kenya and issued a very lengthy report, gave it as their considered opinion that in the South the Kikuyu were living at a population

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density of about two hundred and fifty to the square mile when the first alienation of their land took place. This, for an agricultural people, is a high figure, especially if it is remembered that besides land for cultivation they needed land for grazing their cattle and sheep and goats, and forest land to supply fuel, not to mention room for natural increase and expansion. Not all their land by any means was under cultivation, and large tracts of it were bush. To the white man bushland as distinct from cultivated land and grassland, appeared to be unutilized land and many a settler who took up areas in the Kikuyu country in the early days holds firmly to the view that the land which he took over was unoccupied and unused, because it was virgin bush. But to the African virgin bush is the ideal pasturage for goats and sheep, and Kikuyu bushland was as much in use and occupation as are the great grassland farms of the European stock-owners to-day.

In Kikuyu country every family owned land and each family estate had its boundaries which were well known both to the family owning the land and to the neighbours.

When large areas of their land were taken from them, some of the Kikuyu remained on the land and worked for the white man who had taken over the land for farming, others moved into other parts of the Kikuyu country to become tenants-at-will on the land of other families.

Gradually as the population density has increased the Kikuyu surplus population has been forced to move out of the Reserve, until to-day there are over a hundred

thousand Kikuyu living as squatters on European farms all over Kenya.

It is a significant fact that the population density to-day over that part of Kikuyu country which is still theirs, is officially given as two hundred and fifty to the square mile, or the same figure as the one estimated as representing the density when alienation of land started, but this is only so because over one hundred thousand Kikuyu have had to leave their own land and their own homes to become squatters on European owned land.

Again and again in the Press the settlers express the opinion that the Kikuyu like the squatter system, and that they prefer to be squatters than to live in their own Reserve. In conversation, too, settlers strenuously uphold this view. No one, they say, forces the Kikuyu familes to come and be squatters. If they don't like their condition as squatters once they have come, well, they can always go back to their Reserve. The fact that they go to settlers and beg to be allowed to become squatters, and that they are so reluctant to leave once they have settled down is held to be proof that they become squatters of their own free will. Nothing could be farther from the real truth. In a very limited sense it is true that they become squatters of their own free will, in that nobody commands them to leave their Reserve, but economic pressure is a far more potent factor than any commands could be, and the population density figures speak for themselves.

The squatter system is indeed a great boon to the Kikuyu, for if it did not exist it is hard to say what the hundred thousand Kikuyu who have made use of

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it would do ; but it is idle to suggest that they would prefer to be squatters than to have sufficient land of their own in their own country.

In return for giving his labour at a very low wage, a man who becomes a squatter on a European farm is given land for himself and his family to cultivate, and to build on and is given grazing rights for his sheep and goats. His position in relation to the settler is governed by a law which is intended to safeguard the interests of both the settler and the squatter.

Under this system the native gets more land to cultivate than he could possibly get in an *overcrowded* Reserve, and far more room to graze his stock, and if the European on whose land he settles is fair and just, his position is not really bad, except for one thing. The land is not his own. At any moment, after due notice has been given, he may be turned out, and must go and find somewhere else to settle and start all over again. That is what makes the position of a squatter so unsatisfactory.

The Carter Commission realized that the Kikuyu tribe had not really adequate land, and have recommended certain additions to the Reserve. These additions are not, however, enough to give more than temporary relief to the situation, for the extent of the land to be added is only such that if all the squatters returned (as they would like to do), the population density of the whole Kikuyu area with its additions would still be two hundred and fifty to the square mile.

The Kikuyu as a whole know very well that the settlers as a whole are very adverse to their being given any more land, and they know too that covetous eyes

are still very frequently cast on the land which is still theirs. Of the land alienated to, and owned by, the settlers much is still undeveloped and unused, and to the Kikuyu it is very unfair that this should be so when they could use and develop much of it at once.

Another of the reasons why the Africans hate and distrust the settler community as a whole, lies in the determined efforts of the settlers in Kenya to prevent the natives growing certain crops such as coffee. The Kenya natives know quite well that in the neighbouring territories of Uganda and Tanganyika the Africans are allowed to grow coffee and that they make quite a good profit from doing so, and they cannot see why they should not be allowed to do the same in Kenya.

Actually in the last few years permission to grow coffee has been given to the natives of certain restricted areas in Kenya, but the settlers do not approve of this step, and the Africans know that they do not, and hate them because of it. The settlers of course consider that they have adequate reasons for objecting to the growing of coffee and of other crops by the natives. Among the reasons usually given, one is that the African does not really understand the growing of coffee and how to deal with it, so that if he grew it, and if his product was exported as Kenya coffee, it would lower the high standard of Kenya coffee of which the settler is very proud.

Another reason given is that through not being properly looked after native coffee would become diseased, and would thus become a menace to the European coffee plantations.

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In point of fact natives have been employed now for so long on coffee estates in Kenya, that many of them have quite a good knowledge of coffee growing and coffee curing, while objection that the native coffee would become diseased and so a menace may be countered with the fact that by no means all the European owned coffee is free from this criticism.

Occasionally in the newspapers—both in letters and in reports of meetings of various farming associations—the real cause of the settlers' objection to the growing of coffee by natives is revealed. The African with much lower overhead expenses could certainly produce for a much lower cost, and so could set up in serious competition from the economic point of view. In fact the conflict between the native and European interests is involved.

So long as the interests of the African do not threaten those of the settler community, the settlers are prepared to help the native. But, and this is quite natural, if there is any conflict of interests the settler puts his own interests first. The natives of Kenya know this only too well, and that is why they are so apprehensive that the demand of the Kenya settler for self-government will one day be granted.

As I have said already a very large proportion of the Kenya settlers do everything that they can to be fair and just to the Africans, and it is therefore all the more unfortunate that a small minority is always doing and saying things that keep the hatred and distrust alive. The settlers probably forget that the local newspapers are very carefully read by many natives to-day, and that the opinions expressed in 'letters to

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the Editor' soon become widely known, for the educated African who reads the papers passes on his information at once.

The European political and semi-political associations which exist in almost every district, hold meetings in which they discuss with great frankness their attitude towards the Government and the future of Kenya, &c. Reports of these discussions are often published at length in the local press and are carefully studied by the educated Africans. As a result of this study they are well aware of settler opinion as it is expressed at these meetings, and they forget that very often these views do not really reflect the views of the settlers as a whole, for the really hard-working settler of the best type very often cannot find time to attend political meetings.

Another result of the perusal of the reports of political meetings held by the settlers, is that the Africans get the impression that so long as a group of people call themselves an ' Association ', they are entitled to attack the Government as much as they like ! Consequently not a few native political associations have been formed, and these are much resented by the settlers.

The following extracts taken from the *East African Standard* of 2 September 1935 will serve to illustrate the attitude of the settlers in Kenya. At a meeting of the Limuru District Association Mr. Tarlton is reported as saying :

' The position now is worse than it was thirty years ago. What they wanted was control of their own affairs and not merely a say in that control. They were justified in demand-

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ing this as they provided the money for the running of the country.'

In a letter to the Editor on the same date are the following passages :

' Under the above authorities ' [the Civil Administration and the Colonial Office] ' we are being taxed to the uttermost without having any control whatever of the manner in which the taxes are imposed, this is obviously contrary to the basis of British liberty so finely expressed in the phrase " no taxation without representation ", the British native-born sons of the soil are disinherited ; the work of ruling the country which should be theirs is taken from them and given to strangers from afar.'

' Such conditions of slavery as I have mentioned above are without parallel in all records of modern British history.'

The natives can only draw one conclusion from such statements as these which appear almost every day. The settler wants to rule Kenya himself, and wants the power to be taken from an impartial government and given to himself.

The settlers are always arguing that there should be no taxation without representation, but they forget that a European community of about sixteen thousand people (including women and children) has eleven elected representatives on the Legislative Council, while the three million natives have only two nominated representatives. The settlers consider that they provide the money for the running of the country, and that therefore they should be the rulers. They forget that the three million Africans and many thousands of Indians also pay taxes both direct and indirect, and in proportion to their wealth are probably more heavily taxed than the Europeans.

If the country is to be governed by representatives of the people, and not by an impartial government set up by the Colonial Office, then the Africans and the Indians who are also tax-paying British subjects have every right to be fully represented.

It is not only in political matters that the natives copy the settlers. Again and again in Kenya one comes across complaints that at the week-ends their native labourers indulge in excessive drinking of 'pombe' or native beer. The example of a certain section of the European community is undoubtedly responsible for this. I do not for a moment wish to suggest that all or even the majority of Kenya settlers indulge in excessive drinking, for that is far from the truth, but there is undoubtedly a section that does do so—and moreover it is done in the presence of their African servants—and the example of the minority is having its effect.

As I said at the beginning of this chapter, the settlers' attitude is that their presence is of very great benefit to the African, that they have provided him with a means of obtaining money for taxes through wages, and have given him tremendous opportunities of learning new and advanced methods of agriculture. It is of course true that a great many natives to-day do go and work for European employers in order to pay their taxes and buy various commodities such as cotton cloth, sugar, soap, &c., from the shops. But it must be remembered that a much greater number of natives obtain all the money they require for these purposes from other sources, and that as time goes on more and more of them will probably do so.

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The rates of wages ruling in Kenya to-day are very low indeed, and many natives are finding that they can earn as much money by working for themselves on their own land as they can by working as labourers on European estates. Moreover, at the present time, owing to the economic depression, employment is very hard to obtain, and more and more natives are being forced to think of other methods of obtaining money.

When ordinary farm labour is only being paid at the rate of from 8s. to 12s. a month for an eight- or even a nine-hour working day, it might be expected that the settlers in Kenya could make a living out of farming even in years of depression, but this is not the case, for the cheapness of labour is more than counterbalanced by the excessively high cost of other things. Transport in Kenya is very expensive, and the railway freight charges in particular are considered by most settlers to be much too high; although certain farm products like maize are given a flat rate which can hardly be economic from the railway's point of view. Other things with which the settlers have to contend are a most uncertain climate, as far as rainfall is concerned, and a whole host of insect pests, such as locusts, mealy bug, &c.

Kenya, or at any rate the Highlands of Kenya, is regarded by most people as essentially *a white man's country*, but although I was born and bred in Kenya, and am very fond of my native land, I am not yet convinced that this view has been justified.

If a country is to be regarded as truly a white man's country, it must be possible for white men to live their continuously for generation after generation and

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make a living. It is not sufficient that the climate is good, the economic situation has to be taken into account.

As one who was born and bred in the Highlands of Kenya, I can testify that the climate is ideal, but I am certain that the strain of living continuously at a high altitude must be counteracted by periodic visits to a lower level, if health is not to be impaired. Luckily nowadays there are ever-increasing facilities for sea-side holidays, and it is less and less necessary to go to Europe from the health point of view.

For people who have a certain amount of private income in the form of pensions, &c., I believe that Kenya is ideal, but that is a very different thing from the conviction that Kenya is a good place for permanent white settlement on a large scale.

The geographical situation of the Highlands of Kenya is, in my opinion, against economic development. The fact that all exports have got to be carried three or four hundred miles by rail to the coast, and have then to be shipped to Europe either through the Suez Canal or via the Cape of Good Hope, means that low-priced commodities like maize can never really compete in the world's market. When the market prices are good, coffee, tea and sisal can undoubtedly be made to pay well, but the two former crops will only do well in certain areas, and sisal is more a crop for large companies than for small farmers.

Insect pests and a very uncertain rainfall also play their part in preventing the economic development of the country. The former can be combated by science—at a price—but the rainfall problem is more

difficult, and there can be very little doubt that Kenya is getting drier and the rainfall more uncertain all the time.

The recent discovery of fairly extensive goldfields in Kenya will undoubtedly very much help the economic development of the country from the settlers' point of view, for the goldfields will provide a local market for much local produce which could not be exported at an economic price. But the natives of Kenya could themselves probably produce most of the requirements at a lower cost than the settlers, for their cost of living and their overhead expenses are so very much lower.

In the past one of the biggest handicaps to native competition with the settler was the fact that there was no organization to facilitate the flow of produce from the native areas, but each year more and more roads are being opened up in the Native Reserves. Each year the organization of marketing schemes is going on, and native-grown produce of all kinds will thus compete each year more and more with the produce of the settled areas.

Personally I believe that the proper economic development of Kenya depends upon its being made possible for all of the three million natives to play their part as primary producers, but if this is done the competition may become very severe, for the settlers, except in such plantation crops as sisal and tea and perhaps coffee.

The situation of the settlers in Kenya to-day is far from promising. A combination of successive years of drought has coincided with a period of world

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trade depression, and from what the settlers themselves say, a very large number of them are on the verge of ruin. The natives too have felt the effects of the drought and locusts very severely but they can recover more easily than the white man because they can live much more cheaply.

## VIII

### SCIENCE AND THE AFRICAN

NOT LONG ago a Government official said to me : ' The natives of the Kikuyu Reserve have a wonderfully rich country, and if only they could be persuaded to cultivate scientifically, they could more than double their output.'

The sentence sums up the attitude of a very great number of Europeans not only to African agricultural methods, but many of their other activities as well.

To the white man the principal object of agriculture is to produce as large a crop as the land can be made to yield, and he firmly believes that his own methods of agriculture must be the best. It is commonly assumed that because the methods of an African tribe differ from those of the English people, therefore the African's methods are unscientific.

Let us briefly consider the Kikuyu methods of crop planting and see whether or not they are really so unscientific and foolish as they appear to be at first sight.

The object of the Kikuyu peasant is primarily to produce food in sufficiency for himself and his family, and he wants not only an abundant food supply but also a varied one. Almost all the country which is

in the possession of the Kikuyu to-day is broken up into hills and valleys, so that except for small areas almost all cultivation has to be on the sloping sides of valleys. There are two main wet or 'rainy' seasons when planting takes place, and consequently two harvests each year. Of these two rainy seasons one is comparatively long and one is short, and although some crops can be planted equally successfully during the long and short rains, others cannot. If, for example, the tree-pea, *Njugu*, is planted in the short rains it will be a failure, for it is a slow-growing plant and the rains would be over before it had begun to flower, and in consequence there would be no crop. On the other hand if *Mwere*, a form of eleuysine, was planted in the long rains it would be ready for harvest before the rains were over, as it grows very fast.

Without suggesting that these and similar discoveries were due to scientific research by the Kikuyu it is clear that the methods of research by trial and error have led the Kikuyu to important conclusions as to the best seasons for the planting of different crops.

Let us look further. When a piece of ground has been cleared and hoed and prepared for planting a number of different crops are planted all mixed up on one and the same patch. No attempt is made to segregate the different crops, and no attempt is made to plant in lines. This to the white man appears to be very crude and unscientific. I have heard it argued again and again that if a Kikuyu would only divide up the plot of ground that he

happens to have available, and would plant his maize in one part of it, his beans in another and his sweet potatoes in another and so on, he would get a bigger yield of each of these crops, and, moreover, a better one.

But would he?

Let us see what actually happens. Let us imagine that a Kikuyu has an acre of ground available for planting at the beginning of the long rains. He plants over the whole area maize, beans of two kinds, and tree-peas. In planting these the maize and the tree-pea seeds are put in first, irregularly all over the plot, and in a few days—when the seedlings have appeared—the two varieties of beans are planted, again quite irregularly, in the gaps between the maize and pea seedlings. In a few days the bean seedlings also appear, and then cuttings of sweet potato vine are put in all among the growing seedlings of the various other crops.

One of the varieties of bean that is planted is a very quick-growing plant, and this is harvested long before anything else is ready. This bean is never stored away in granaries for use at a later date, but is consumed more or less at once, and provides the families with fresh food, which—with the sweet potatoes planted at the beginning of the previous short rains, and which are just beginning to yield—is very welcome as a supplement to food made from dried crops from the granaries.

This bean having been uprooted and harvested the plot of ground is now left with maize which is rapidly coming into flower, the tree-peas which are

very slowly growing, the sweet-potato vine which is slowly making a carpet of green vine all over the ground, and finally the slower growing variety of bean. Before long the rains are over and the hot season starts. The maize is harvested leaving the sweet potatoes, tree-peas and the other variety of bean in possession of the soil. The sweet-potato vine has by now completely covered the ground, and it prevents the violent heat of the dry season from sucking up all the moisture from the soil. Even at the driest time of the year if you dig into the soil in a field covered with sweet-potato vine, you will find that it is damp even quite near the surface. Thus aided, the very slow-growing tree-pea and the slow-growing bean can withstand the hot season and continue to grow. The slow-growing bean goes on flowering and producing a crop for a long time, and can often be seen with dry pods ready to be picked, green pods and flowers all on the same plant at the same time. This bean is also particularly valuable to the Kikuyu as it yields a very succulent form of spinach.

During the dry season very violent thunderstorms accompanied by an hour or two of torrential rain are not uncommon. As I have already pointed out the majority of Kikuyu cultivation is on the slopes of hills. The carpet of sweet-potato vine prevents these violent storms from washing the soil down into the streams below, and at the same time it conserves the moisture which results from these storms.

When the dry season is nearly over the tree-peas

are harvested but instead of being up-rooted they are roughly pruned, and left to stand during the succeeding short rains, when they flower a second time and produce a second crop at the end of the next dry season. The sweet-potato vine also starts yielding a crop just at the end of the first dry season following the rainy season in which it was planted and goes on yielding right through the succeeding short rains.

With the coming of the short rains a second plot of ground—which had been prepared for planting during the dry season—is planted very much in the same way as before, only the tree-pea is replaced by cleuysine and millet, and meanwhile the plot planted during the previous long rains continues to yield its harvest of sweet potatoes, spinach and slow-growing beans.

Now imagine for a minute that on the same acre of ground which was available at the beginning of the long rains the native cultivator had planted in the European way. Suppose that over a quarter of an acre he had planted maize in straight rows, close together, so that the yield over the quarter of an acre thus planted was three times as great as the yield over a quarter of an acre planted in his own traditional method. Suppose again that he planted a quarter of an acre with tree-peas, a quarter of an acre with sweet-potato vine, and a quarter of an acre with the two varieties of beans. By this method at the end of the dry season following the rains he would have harvested only three-quarters as much maize, and beans and peas as he would otherwise have done,

and in addition he would have only a quarter of an acre instead of an acre of ground yielding sweet potatoes and spinach during the next short rains. Not only would his actual yield per acre thus be decreased, but also the soil over three-quarters of his whole acre would have been exposed to the risk of serious denudation if a violent thunderstorm took place during the dry season, and moreover his tree-pea crop would have suffered through not having the moisture-conserving shade of the sweet-potato vine round its roots.

The habit of regarding African methods of agriculture or of any other activities as inherently bad because they are different from our own is most unwise. I do not suggest that the methods used by different native tribes are all perfect. Doubtless the methods of agriculture employed by the Kikuyu could almost certainly be improved in many details, but this could only be done if European methods of research were employed in trying to develop the African method of cultivation, which is a very different thing from trying to substitute European methods of planting for those which have been evolved out of research by trial and error.

It may be argued that the Kikuyu method of cultivation must be very exhausting to the soil, and the fact that after using a piece of ground for two or three seasons, the native *whenever possible* lets it go back temporarily to bush is held to support this view. But after all the native must have bushland as pasturage for his sheep and goats, and it is not uneconomic to put cultivated land back to grazing from time to time, while at the same time taking



SCENES AT WANGI'S MARKET

(See page 14)

(Above) THE POTATO SECTION. (THERE IS A VERY MARKED TENDENCY TO GROW VARIETIES OF THE EUROPEAN POTATO. THIS IS WELL ILLUSTRATED HERE.)

(Below) THE TUE. SECTION



back some grazing land and using it for cultivation.

Besides serving as such an excellent soil protector, the sweet-potato vine makes a very excellent food for cattle and goats and sheep, and it is particularly valuable for milch cows, and for young stock. This fact, together with the excellent food value of its roots, very largely compensates for its disadvantages. To-day, however, there is a very marked tendency, fostered by European influence, to grow varieties of the European potato instead of the sweet potato. This is due to the fact that the ordinary potato is easily marketable in the towns, whereas the sweet potato, which does not keep at all well once it has been dug up, does not find such a ready market, also the yield of ordinary potatoes to the acre is a very high one.

The African natives have, of course, no scientific knowledge of food values, and they do not realize that in replacing the sweet potato by the ordinary potato, they are reducing the food value in the diet of their families. In the same way the growing of new and more productive forms of maize is often detrimental to the diet of the natives, although possibly better for marketing purposes.

For a peasant people living almost entirely on what they can grow, it is far more necessary that a variety of plants should be grown than that a few productive plants like maize and the ordinary potato should be allowed to dominate to the exclusion of all else, for otherwise the diet of the tribe is rendered unsatisfactory.

Those who are responsible for the development of native agriculture are becoming more and more alive to this and they are fully aware of the danger of encouraging purely 'cash' crops like cotton, to the detriment of the natives' food supply, but I believe that a great deal more active research into native methods of food production and into the food value of various native plants should be undertaken. This is undoubtedly one of the lines along which science can help the African a great deal.

In the investigation and control of the diseases of cattle and sheep in Kenya the Veterinary Department is carrying out excellent work which is of ever-increasing value to the African, and as education spreads and the native can understand better the reasons for the various measures advised by the Veterinary Department, confidence will no doubt grow. At present there is a feeling among a large number of natives that the Veterinary Department exists simply to impose irksome quarantine measures and to enforce a ritual washing of cattle in some parts of the country.

Although most of the native tribes in Kenya who own cattle have a certain amount of very excellent knowledge about cattle, they have almost no idea of how infection spreads (and this is equally true in connexion with human diseases). In some cases, as for example in areas where the deadly tsetse fly occurs, the natives are aware of the relationship between insects and the cattle diseases, but in view of the fact that many species of tick do not carry disease, they do not associate East Coast Fever—

which is one of the most deadly cattle diseases in Kenya—with ticks. As they do not associate this disease with ticks the dipping of cattle and the killing of ticks seems to them a useless waste of time. But already a small section of the natives are beginning to understand and with a spread of knowledge it is fairly certain that the natives will co-operate gladly with the authorities.

Because cattle and goats and sheep are of more than economic importance to the African, because they enter so much into the social life and religion of the people, they are prepared to take a lot of trouble to safeguard their stock. But at present they have very little confidence in the Veterinary Department and so it becomes all the more essential that this confidence should be established.

Not so many years ago, in connexion with an outbreak of rinderpest, extensive inoculation of native cattle took place, and, for some reason or other, a good many of the inoculated cattle died. This was very unfortunate, for instead of establishing confidence it had an entirely contrary effect.

The various tribes who own cattle have remedies of their own for cattle diseases, and some of these appear on the face of them to be rather fantastic, while others suggest a real knowledge. All the methods are worth careful investigation and some of them might prove to be of great value.

I believe that the Veterinary Department has already carried out some work along these lines and this work is worth continuing. I have only seen one native remedy in use, and that was the application

of the juice of a certain plant to some cases of severe foot-rot in sheep, the result being certainly very satisfactory.

As in the treatment of sickness in cattle so in human diseases the natives of Kenya exhibit a curious mixture of ignorance and knowledge.

I am personally convinced that it would be very well worth while to carry out a really lengthy scientific investigation into all the various native methods of curing diseases of every description. Some of them will undoubtedly be found to be simply magical, and this is particularly true of the 'medicines' which a native 'medicine man' keeps in little gourd bottles in his bag. Most African natives go and consult a medicine man only when they or their relatives are suffering from a complaint which they do not recognize and understand, just as we only consult a doctor if we must. In the same way that a European has his medicine chest with quinine, aspirin, calomel and cascara, so almost every adult native knows the cures for the more ordinary complaints to which he is subject, and does not worry to consult a medicine man. It is these standard remedies of the African natives that are more worth careful investigation than the semi- or wholly-magical cures of the medicine man, for they are the ones which have stood the test of trial and error, and have become well known because of their efficiency.

Almost all of these standard cures are derived from plants, and consist of the juices of various barks and trees, or the crushed seeds of various shrubs. For the Kikuyu tribe alone the list of medicinal

herbs and plants is over thirty. Some of them are very rare and are brought from long distances and sold at the markets, others are common and can easily be collected by anyone.

The Kikuyu cure for certain forms of intestinal parasites is undoubtedly very successful; and from what I have seen it seems to be more certain than the common European drugs used for this complaint.

Research by the processes of trial and error is of course the basis upon which the Africans carry out their investigations into the curative properties of plant juices, &c., and two interesting examples of how the process is still going on have recently come to my knowledge.

In the old days Kikuyu country was free from malaria, but now that many Kikuyu travel into malarial areas like Mombasa and the country round the shores of Victoria Nyanza, many suffer badly from this disease. About four years ago a Kikuyu set himself to find a cure for malaria, and began testing the value of juices from various barks. Just before I left Kenya a month ago, I heard that he had recently discovered a cure, and that among those completely cured were two of my own employees who have been suffering from recurrent attacks of malaria ever since they went on safari with me to a very malarial area in 1932. If this is true, and I have no reason to doubt it, then it would seem that this native has made a discovery of importance to the whole world.

Although most of the native cures are herbal, they are not all of plant origin. Unfortunately, tuberculosis is on the increase in some parts of Kenya,

and the natives have been experimenting to find something that will check it. So far as I know no native claims to be able to cure it, but recently I have heard from several sources that they have discovered that zebra fat is of real value as a treatment.

I do not know enough about the properties of zebra fat to know why this should be so, nor have I any definite proof that it is so, but when one finds natives of several different tribes taking a great deal of trouble to acquire some of this substance, one doubts that the reputation of the value of zebra fat can be entirely without foundation.

Earlier in this chapter I mentioned the necessity of establishing native confidence in the work of the Veterinary Department, and I said that I was sure that once this confidence was really established the native would co-operate in all efforts to control and cure cattle diseases. The attitude of an ever-growing number of natives to European medical work—in which they now have considerable confidence—confirms this.

So readily in fact do the natives take to epsom salts and quinine, aspirin and cascara, &c., that my own fear is that they may forget their own cures which are often not so easy to obtain, and that in consequence knowledge of real value may be lost to the world.

I have been advocating that veterinary and medical science should try to find out more about the various African cures for diseases, but if they are to do so satisfactorily they may have to call the science of anthropology to their aid. Even then, they may not

be entirely successful, for many Africans are very jealous of their tribal customs, and are unwilling to tell any foreigners frankly about them.

Anthropological investigation, if it is to be properly carried out by the methods advocated to-day, means that the investigator must learn the language of the people he is studying very carefully indeed. A superficial knowledge of the language is not enough, nor is it enough to live among them, unless that means that the contact is so close that a real sympathy and understanding is established.

As an anthropologist I know only too well how easy it is to get what one thinks is a very deep and real knowledge of the customs of a tribe, only to find out later that the depths have not been plumbed at all, and that a very great deal has been held back.

Investigation by question and direct inquiry is very dangerous indeed, although it may often yield what appear to be excellent results.

Unsolicited comment often yields far more information than a host of questions, and the surest way to knowledge is to earn the privilege of being present at discussions and conversations in the village after the evening meal is over. Another exceedingly good way of getting an insight into what a native tribe thinks about their own customs is by means of a cinema camera. Many people believe in the value of the cinema camera as a recorder of native customs and ceremonies but to me its chief value lies in the opportunity that it gives to learn much that would otherwise be obscure.

If an anthropologist gets permission to be present

at a native ceremony there is much that is going on all around him that he cannot possibly even notice, let alone observe carefully and note down. Nor can he interrupt the proceedings without causing serious annoyance and perhaps being asked to leave.

Further, if he asks direct questions as to what is happening and why such and such a group is doing one thing in one corner while others are doing something else, he will either be told a direct lie or else be put off with a half-truth by way of an answer.

But suppose that he has with him a cinema camera he can get an accurate record of all that is going on. If he then gets this developed and exhibits it in his camp, not once, but many times, to an audience composed of members of the tribe he is investigating, he will learn a lot. There will probably be no necessity to ask any questions for with a screen in front of them depicting the ceremony over again they will talk freely and very often forget entirely that the investigator is there in the darkness operating the machine and listening.

All kinds of minute details about the ceremony can be learned in this way and particularly so if the projector is such that a still picture can be retained on the screen whenever it is required.

By such a method as this a ceremony which can only be seen once in actual life can be revisited again and again in the company of guides of all types, for not only will the participants in the ceremony be keen to see themselves on the screen, but old men and women will come and talk. Often they will comment that that was not the way such and such a

thing was done when they were young, and sometimes they can even be persuaded to show how they would have done it, so disarming is the power of the screen.

At present in Kenya the study of anthropology has been sadly neglected. Thousands of pounds are spent upon research there into many other problems, but practically nothing is spent upon the study of the native population.

It is surprising that this should be so, for a proper understanding of the African people is really very essential to the whole country, and money spent upon an Anthropological Survey would be money well spent. Probably the reason why no such survey is carried out is that many people still believe that Anthropology consists for the most part of two things, a study of measurements of the head, and a study of customs that are fast disappearing.

Nothing could be farther from the truth to-day. Anthropology to-day concerns itself very largely with the problems of the contact of European civilized races with those who are less advanced from the European point of view. In order to do this it is often necessary to find out what the original customs and organization of a native people were before they were influenced from outside, but any anthropological study to-day which stops short there, and does not take into consideration the problems which are arising out of culture contact, is not really worthy of the name.

I have already pointed out that the co-operation of anthropology would probably be necessary for the investigation of native drugs and herbal remedies,

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and it would be equally helpful to those who are responsible for the forwarding of native agriculture, to missionaries and above all to Government officials.

In Kenya Colony where the contact of European and African is so marked and so fraught with difficulties and misunderstandings of all kinds, the value of a well-organized anthropological survey on modern lines cannot be over-estimated.

## IX

### THE NATIVES AND NAIROBI

THERE ARE a very large number of natives living in Nairobi—and to some extent in the smaller townships of Kenya—whose position raises an immense number of problems.

In the ordinary course of events a native who is employed by a white man on a farm or on a Government station arranges to have his wife and family live nearby and they are provided with a hut and a piece of ground to be cultivated, so that the normal family life continues without any violent disruption. In the case of contract labour that comes in gangs from the Reserves for six months, this practice is of course not possible, but that does not matter so much because the natives who undertake labour on the six months basis are, in the vast majority of cases, young unmarried men.

But the natives who work in Nairobi are in a very different situation indeed. They fall into four main categories and we will take first of all the problems relating to those who are employed as personal servants, cooks, house-boys and hotel waiters, whose work requires their being on the premises until fairly late at night and first thing

in the morning. The natives in this category are almost always provided with living-quarters of some kind on the spot, but these quarters are usually small and often two or three servants share a single room. Although a very high percentage of them are married men, it is the rarest thing to find that any provision is made which would allow the wives to come and live on the premises, and even where this was possible it is unlikely in most cases that the men would ask their wives to come.

Married natives expect their wives to work in the fields, to cultivate crops and to look after the home, and they know that if they came to Nairobi the home would have to be neglected. Also the men know quite well that the cost of feeding a wife, and possibly a family, in Nairobi is too great to be borne out of the ordinary wage, while at home the wife and family can live on the produce of the gardens, and only require money for clothing, soap and little extras like tea and sugar every now and then.

And so—partly because no quarters are provided in most of the cases where a man could otherwise have his wife and family with him, and partly because they do not want to have their families to live in Nairobi with them as this means much unnecessary expense which they cannot afford—most of the natives, personal boys, house-boys and cooks working in Nairobi live away from their wives and can only see them on the rare occasions when they get a sufficiently long holiday to journey to the particular Reserve where their home is situated.

This state of affairs is responsible for two very

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serious problems. In the Reserves the women who have been left behind to look after the home and the family gardens and the children—if there are any—find themselves living the life of grass widows. If they are young and healthy they find it very hard to remain entirely faithful to their husbands, for there are always a number of young unmarried men about, who cannot afford to marry and who are all too willing to take advantage of the absence of husbands many miles away.

It often happens, therefore, that when at last a husband does come home for a holiday, probably without any warning, he finds that his place has been usurped by some other man. This of course has repercussions. Even if the leave of absence asked for, and granted by the employer was only for a short period, say a week or a fortnight, a husband who comes home and finds his wife living with another man will not return to his work until he has taken some steps to investigate the whole situation and put the matter right. More often than not he cannot write to his employer and tell him what has happened and so he takes matters into his own hands and remains at home until he has settled the affair in some way or another. This done he starts off back to his work in Nairobi and when he gets there he probably finds that his irate employer has taken out a summons against him for breach of contract and has at the same time filled the post by taking on some one else. From the European employer's point of view such action is undoubtedly justified. His servant has asked

for shall we say fourteen days' leave of absence and he has made his plans accordingly. He expects the servant back on a fixed day but he does not arrive, nor is there any news from him. Days pass and still the servant does not return, a new servant must be found to take his place and it seems quite reasonable to believe that the other has deserted, and therefore action is taken against him.

From the native's point of view to lose his job and to be sued for desertion because on arrival at home he found that his place had been taken by another man, and because he had in consequence overstayed his leave in order to settle matters, is simply adding insult to injury. He has stayed because of happenings beyond his control, just as an illness might cause an English servant to overstay his leave, and the fact that he cannot write and communicate the situation to his master is not after all his fault, for as likely as not there is no post office available to him in the Reserve where his home is, even if he were able to write.

If the employment of house-boys and personal servants in Nairobi in the circumstances described above is often the cause of the disruption of homes in the Reserve, it is also often the cause of much other suffering.

Nairobi has a fairly large population of prostitutes who are quite willing to go and visit African servants in their sleeping-quarters at night and slip away again in the early hours of the morning. These women do not demand to be fed and clothed by those whom they visit, and as their own cost of living

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is very small they do not ask for much remuneration. But the way in which they spread disease can be imagined. In addition to the encouragement of prostitution there is another great evil which arises from the separation of husbands from their wives, for in Nairobi there are other ways in which many cooks and personal boys can satisfy their desires when they are living away from their homes.

We have already seen that every day vast numbers of Kikuyu women and girls walk into Nairobi from outlying districts and sell potatoes and sugar-cane and bananas, &c. Most of these commodities are sold to the house-boys of Nairobi, many of whom make arrangements for a regular weekly supply of such food. When the same girl brings the supply of potatoes week after week a flirtation often ensues, and not infrequently the girl becomes a kind of concubine, spending an occasional night in the boy's quarters and telling her parents that she had been delayed and had slept with friends on the way home. In these cases the man very seldom has any intention of taking the girl as a second wife, and he probably tires of her before long. Nor in most cases does she take the matter very seriously, sometimes she is actually betrothed to some one in the Reserve and in due course marries and settles down, but on the other hand it is from this class of girl that many of the prostitutes are derived and although by no means all the girls who become temporary concubines to servants in Nairobi turn to prostitution, a fairly large percentage of them undoubtedly do so.

Some servants—and this is more particularly

true of those who have adopted the Mahomedan religion—take *temporary* wives, and if there is no room for such wives to live in on the premises they arrange for them to live somewhere in one of the native quarters of Nairobi and then visit them there. They can seldom afford to give them very much money, and not a few of these temporary wives make a little money each day by allowing men who live in the native quarter to visit them.

Turning from the problems of the male domestic servants in Nairobi we must see what happens to those employed as office-boys, messengers, &c., men whose work is of a purely diurnal character and who are seldom provided with living-quarters by their employers, but who have to house themselves.

In the main native quarter of the town there are very many houses or huts in which the owners let out sleeping-quarters, and there are also Municipal buildings in which natives can rent cubicles and rooms according to their means, and it is chiefly the office-boys and messengers who make use of these facilities.

Like the servant class a great many of these people are living a long way from their homes and wives and families—office-boys and messengers in Kenya are usually married men—and in consequence prostitution flourishes. As I have pointed out some of the temporary wives of cooks and house-boys—knowing that their husbands will not finish work until late in the evening—are not beyond earning extra money for themselves by allowing men to

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visit them, and prostitutes of the more ordinary type are also common.

Quite apart from the evils of spreading disease these practices lead to other evils. The wages of office-boys and messengers are not very high and after feeding, housing and clothing themselves there is not very much left to spend upon women, let alone to put by for their wives. The incentive to petty pilfering and even to burglary is therefore very great and not a few criminals are derived from this class.

There is a third category which is composed of natives employed in big Government departments like the Public Works and the Railway. These natives are provided with living-quarters, and do not have to go and live in the ordinary native areas of the township. I have never actually visited the living-quarters provided for these people, but I understand that there are married men's quarters as well as places for single men, but as so many natives prefer not to bring their women folk away from their homes in the Reserve, this provision of married quarters does not necessarily make life any easier for the men.

The fourth big category of natives living in Nairobi are those whose homes are in the nearer parts of the Kikuyu Reserve and who are able to go home constantly. Some of these go home every night and come back to work each morning, while others live in Nairobi during the week and go home for the week-ends. Under these conditions there can be no doubt that their home life can be, and often

is, entirely satisfactory. They can get home frequently and their wives can communicate with them at once if there is any trouble or sickness at home, and they have practically no temptation to do anything which will disrupt their home life.

In view of the advantages of this state of affairs a great many natives who do not really belong to the district, come down to that part of the Reserve that is nearest to Nairobi and try to acquire a footing there. Although this is very satisfactory for those who succeed, it is not entirely fair to those who properly belong to the area, for it is becoming so overcrowded that there is not space for those who wish to continue as purely agricultural peasants, and there are bitter complaints about it.

In a town like Nairobi it is hardly surprising that the natives who are living in such close contact with European town life should try to emulate their employers in all sorts of ways. In the native quarters of the town there are many small hotels and coffee-houses where food and drink are supplied at a handsome profit to the proprietors. In some of these too, dancing takes place at night in a manner that betrays its origin only too clearly.

Instead of the traditional dances of the natives themselves the dancing is based upon the European model. The band usually consists of a concertina, a drum and a triangle, and the tunes consist of slightly altered and native variations of such dance tunes as 'Yes, we have no bananas' and 'Katie'.

All the natives that I have discussed the matter with are unanimous in saying that European forms

of dancing are far more sexual than almost any of their own dances, and to a very great extent that is why this form of dancing is increasingly popular with the natives of the towns.

When natives who have been living in Nairobi for some years go back to their Reserves they tend to take European dancing with them, and I shall never forget a scene that I witnessed in the South Kavirondo Reserve less than a year ago. We were camped near a native Head-man's village, and one day he asked whether we would honour him by coming to watch the dancing in his village that evening. In a district where ordinary dances of the traditional native forms were taking place every night, it never occurred to me that we were being invited to witness anything else. After supper we walked across to the Head-man's village and after our arrival had been announced we were ushered into a large hut dimly lit by a single paraffin hand-lamp which was on the earth floor in the middle of the room. As we entered a concertina burst into tune and I must confess that it was several seconds before I recognized the National Anthem and realized that all around in the semi-darkness were natives standing solemnly to attention. The music stopped and we were quickly provided with seats near the doorway and were able to start taking in the scene. The whole way round the hut were chairs and benches and stools on which sat a very large number of Kavirondo men and about three women.

These men and women were dressed in the most

astonishing variety of clothes that I have ever seen. One man was dressed in a full English evening dress outfit, another was in plus fours and gaudy-coloured shirt and a cloth cap, another in a well-cut lounge suit, and then another in khaki shorts and shirt, red tarbush hat and bare feet, and so on. The women wore English second-hand evening gowns, silk stockings and high heeled shoes, and in addition European hats on their heads, while from their ears hung earrings of western type.

While I was wondering why there were so few women in the room as compared with the number of men present I heard a tittering at the doorway, and the M.C. went out and ushered in four girls in bare legs and short kilted dresses—the ordinary everyday clothing of most of the girls of the district.

As soon as they had entered the band began to play, and the M.C. selected men from those sitting round and allotted them partners and the dancing began. The floor was of rough irregular earth, the only light the dim lantern standing on the floor in the middle of the hut, and in this queer setting a fox-trot was soon in full swing. It was a strange sight indeed. The man in plus fours, hob-nailed shoes and a cloth cap was dancing with a girl in bare legs and feet and a short kilted white dress. One of the women dressed up in European fashion was with the man in tails, while the other was dancing with the local Head-man who had on khaki shorts and shirt and a red fez. Round and round they went, the band keeping on mercilessly, and in spite of the

perspiration of the dancers the music only stopped when the M.C. blew his whistle. On this signal the four local girls withdrew outside once more, and the rest of the party retired to their seats round the room.

After a few minutes the M.C. went outside and brought in some other girls and the dancing started again.

This European dancing in the far-away Reserve was due to the fact that two local natives (the man in the dress-clothes and the man in the lounge suit) had recently come back to the district after a lengthy residence in Nairobi, and had brought with them wives acquired in that town (the two women in second-hand English dresses) and a concertina. Ever since their arrival they had been teaching their local relatives and friends the steps of the fox-trot and two-step, &c., and this evening the dancing was considered to have reached a sufficiently high level to warrant a ball and European spectators !

To me this curious performance was but one more sign of how the habits acquired in Nairobi are being spread into the Reserves, and in the more distant Reserves like South Kavirondo, the influence is the greater, because owing to the distance the men tend to stay away longer from home and to get more deeply influenced before they return.

I have emphasized this blacker side of the effect of Nairobi and other towns upon the natives because I feel that the situation is serious for the country as a whole, but it must not be imagined that there is not a brighter side.

In the native locations of Nairobi there are excellent child welfare centres and a maternity home that is doing magnificent work.

The authorities are fully alive to many of the dangers and difficulties of town life for the natives and among other things the Municipality has organized its own controlled beer shops in order to try to check the uncontrolled sale of liquor in large quantities. Actually, however, a great deal of illicit beer making and beer selling still goes on.

Better housing schemes are continually being worked out and those responsible for public health are doing a great deal to improve the sanitary conditions in the native locations and to check disease of all kinds. But I am convinced that the biggest problem of all and the one that is hardest to solve, is that of what to do to check prostitution and stop the spread of venereal disease.

Some Europeans in Kenya have in the past actually advocated licensed and inspected brothels after the manner of certain continental countries, but this suggestion has been rightly rejected as a solution which is unworthy of the British race. But it is no good just turning down such a suggestion and instead doing nothing at all. But what can be done ? The native men for the most part do not wish to have their wives come and live in the towns, as that means that their gardens and homes in the Reserves are broken up, and all of them look to the day when they will have earned enough money and will be able to go back and live at home. The provision of more and more married quarters for natives liv-

ing in Nairobi would not therefore really meet the case.

Another suggestion which has been put forward is that a large area of land should be set aside near Nairobi especially for natives employed in the town, and that here any native who has permanent or semi-permanent occupation should be given a house and a plot of land, so that his wife and family could live there and cultivate, much as they would in their own Reserve, and yet be sufficiently close to Nairobi and their husbands to obviate the need for prostitution. This suggestion has a good deal in its favour, but it would need very careful organization and much forethought to make it a success.

Among the difficulties involved is the question of what would happen to the children who grew up in this place. They would not all want to follow in their fathers' footsteps, and yet having become completely divorced from the tribal life in the Reserve they would probably be unwilling, as well as unsuited, to return to their old homes. Another difficulty is that inevitably the cost of living and of bringing up a family in this suggested 'garden city' near to Nairobi would be greater than the cost of rearing a family in any of the Reserves, and therefore unless the wages of the men were increased they would probably be unable to meet the costs.

The low level of native wages is a very serious difficulty, not only when a scheme such as this is considered, but also in connexion with all attempts to improve the native standard of living and of health; yet it is hardly likely that employers who are finding

it difficult to make ends meet, even under present conditions, are going to raise wages and so voluntarily add to their own difficulties.

Although the vast majority of the natives who are employed in the towns are men, there are a few women and girls whose position must be briefly considered. A certain number of European families employ native 'ayahs' or nurses for their children, and their position is a very difficult one indeed. Born and bred in the native Reserves where a certain amount of sexual freedom among young unmarried people is usually combined with very strict rules of conduct, they suddenly find themselves in a milieu where males of their own race greatly predominate, and where at the same time they are free from the observation of their parents and friends who would normally take a great deal of trouble to see that the rules of conduct of the tribe were observed.

Given a room to themselves to sleep in in the servants' quarters, and with the long evenings free after the white children have been put to bed, it is hardly surprising that before very long most 'ayahs' form liaisons with the male members of the native staff where they are employed. Sometimes this sort of liaison leads to marriage, but more often to temporary concubinage which ends, as often as not, in outright prostitution. As a result of this most Africans that I have met are strongly against the idea of allowing their daughters to become 'ayahs'.

Many missions have tried from time to time to train girls as 'ayahs' with a view to giving them a profession which will free them from the necessity

of marrying should they wish to be so freed. In the chapter dealing with the problems which arise as a result of missionary work we saw that there was already a serious problem of what to do for girls who fail to attract any man to marry them on a monogamous basis, and some missions have hoped that the profession of 'ayah' would solve the problem. There is, however, great opposition on the part of the Christian natives themselves for they hold that to train a girl as an 'ayah' and let her go into service in Nairobi or elsewhere, is tantamount to driving her into prostitution.

This is indeed a sorry state of affairs. Of course some employers realize that they have a definite responsibility when they engage a girl as an 'ayah', and do everything that they can to help her. But the situation bristles with difficulties which are almost bound to continue until the other problems outlined in this chapter have been satisfactorily solved.

## X

### NATIVE EDUCATION IN KENYA

IN DISCUSSING the problems of missionary work in Kenya I have already indicated that almost the whole of the burden of the education of the natives is borne by the various missionary societies.

In the days when these societies first started their work in the country there was no education in the Western sense at all, and the only people that had a language reduced to writing were the Swahili.

Kiswahili—as the language of this people is called—had been reduced to writing in the Arabic script as a result of long contact with the Mahomedan religion, but none of the tribes living in the interior had any knowledge of reading or writing at all.

In order to make their missionary work more effective it was essential that the natives who were being converted to Christianity should learn to read and write and this meant that one of the first tasks of all missionaries was to reduce the language of the people they were dealing with into writing, and it is solely due to missionary enterprise that this was accomplished as speedily as it was.

In some cases very serious problems have arisen as a result of reducing the various languages to writing,

for there was very little organized co-operation, and where several different societies were at work in different parts of the country of a single tribe, it usually meant that several quite different orthographies came into existence for one and the same language.

In the earlier days the effect of this was not very noticeable, but now that education is becoming more general the problem is becoming serious, and one of the major tasks of the Government Education Department to-day centres round the necessity of trying to compile a uniform script and spelling for the language of each tribe.

To-day the greater part of the education of the African natives still remains in the hands of the missionary societies, and the policy of the Education Department is, on the whole, one of giving financial assistance to approved mission schools rather than of organizing native schools of their own. There are, however, certain very important exceptions to this rule already, and there is a marked tendency to depart from it more and more. In Kenya all native education is entirely voluntary, and the chief difficulty is not to persuade the natives to go to school, but to provide adequate facilities for the ever-increasing numbers of those who are clamouring for education, and in consequence only a very small proportion of the native population has any education at all in the European sense, although of course all natives undergo an education of a sort under tribal conditions.

But although I do not want to minimize the very real value of native tribal education, I do not intend to discuss it here, but rather to discuss the various

forms of Western education which are available to the natives of Kenya, and to analyse some of the resultant problems.

There are still a good many Europeans in Kenya who hold that the native should not be given any education at all. They justify their opinion by making the sweeping statement that all educated natives are insolent, untrustworthy and lazy, and in fact they generalize about native education as a whole because they have had the misfortune to come across a few natives upon whom Western education has had this effect. If they are questioned they nearly always have to admit that they have never personally visited and inspected a native school and any one who has not done so is not really in a position to judge fairly.

No one who knows Kenya at all intimately would deny that some educated natives are perhaps worthy of the epithets insolent, untrustworthy and lazy, but it is certainly not fair to make a wholesale condemnation of native education because of this, although it is interesting to analyse the reasons for it.

As I have already said, even to-day almost all native education is in the hands of the missionary societies, and to all intents and purposes if an African in Kenya wants to learn to read and write and do arithmetic, &c., he has to attend a mission school. Now although most missionary societies would not refuse education to a native if he said that he only wanted education and not Christianity, it remains true that the primary object of mission schools is a religious one, and a native attending such a school is certainly expected to attend

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classes of religious instruction and to be a candidate for eventual baptism.

In consequence there is undoubtedly a certain proportion of the natives who are passing through the mission schools, who are only doing so for the sake of the knowledge they can so obtain and who are not really in the least interested in the moral and ethical teaching which they obtain in addition to the instruction in the art of reading and writing, &c.

Such natives are very often untrustworthy and lazy by nature before they ever entered the school, and possibly even their desire for education was only dictated by the knowledge that with education they would be better able to live by their wits.

In the course of their education they come into contact with the missionary teaching that all men are equal in the eyes of God and, if their interest in religion is merely formal, they naturally tend to add insolence to their other bad characteristics. But to condemn native education which is imported through missions because of the few failures and 'bad hats', is as unfair as to condemn the education of any institution because some of those who have passed through it prove to be failures.

I have already expressed the view that the very fact of the contact of European civilization inevitably means that the religion of the African falls to the ground, and I have also stated that in my opinion the Africans should under the circumstances be given every opportunity to adopt the Christian teaching, because by nature they are religious and must have a religion of some sort to replace their old one.

For this reason I am entirely in favour of the policy of maintaining most of the African education under missionary control; but at the same time I believe that there ought to be one or two non-mission schools in every district, so that natives who do not want to embrace the Christian religion, do not have to make an outward show of doing so, in order to please their teachers.

Let us for a moment leave the general discussion of native education to review the existing educational facilities and turn to schools run by the various missionary societies.

Mission schools can be divided into two principal groups : the central schools situated at the main stations where the education is for the most part under the direct supervision of a European with a trained native staff, and the 'bush schools' or 'out schools' as they are often called, where very elementary education is given under the supervision of a native teacher or teachers who are responsible to the European missionary at the station.

Let us take the bush schools first. The nature of the education available at these schools varies very greatly. In its simplest form a bush school has a single native teacher. The first part of the day is devoted to instruction in reading and writing for beginners, and in this the teacher is assisted by his more advanced pupils. Those attending the schools usually are of very varied ages and both sexes, and it is not an uncommon thing to find a class consisting of two or three small children, a few young men and women, and possibly one or two much older men and women all being taught the first

elements of the art of reading by a more advanced pupil who as likely as not is quite a young boy or girl. One of the really surprising things is that even the elderly men and women are not unwilling to be taught by a person who is so much their junior, nor do they seem to mind being treated in exactly the same way as the children in the class—possibly even their own children.

When the elementary classes are over for the day most of the pupils go home, and the teacher devotes the rest of the time to slightly more advanced education for those of his pupils who have attained the necessary standard. The more advanced lessons usually include dictation, reading practice, simple arithmetic, and finally elementary lessons in the Swahili language, for of course all the main teaching in a bush school is conducted in the vernacular language.

In addition to these very simple bush schools, there are others which although they fall into the same category, are really more advanced and where the teaching given approximates very closely to that given in the central school on the mission station.

In most cases these more advanced bush schools are nowadays under the supervision of a teacher trained at the Jeanes Teachers' Training School at Kabete, which we will discuss more fully presently. At a really developed school of this type the instructions given will include drawing, sewing (for the girls), first aid, elementary geography and history, handiwork, as well of course as the subjects taught in the simpler bush schools.

No one who has not visited one of these schools,

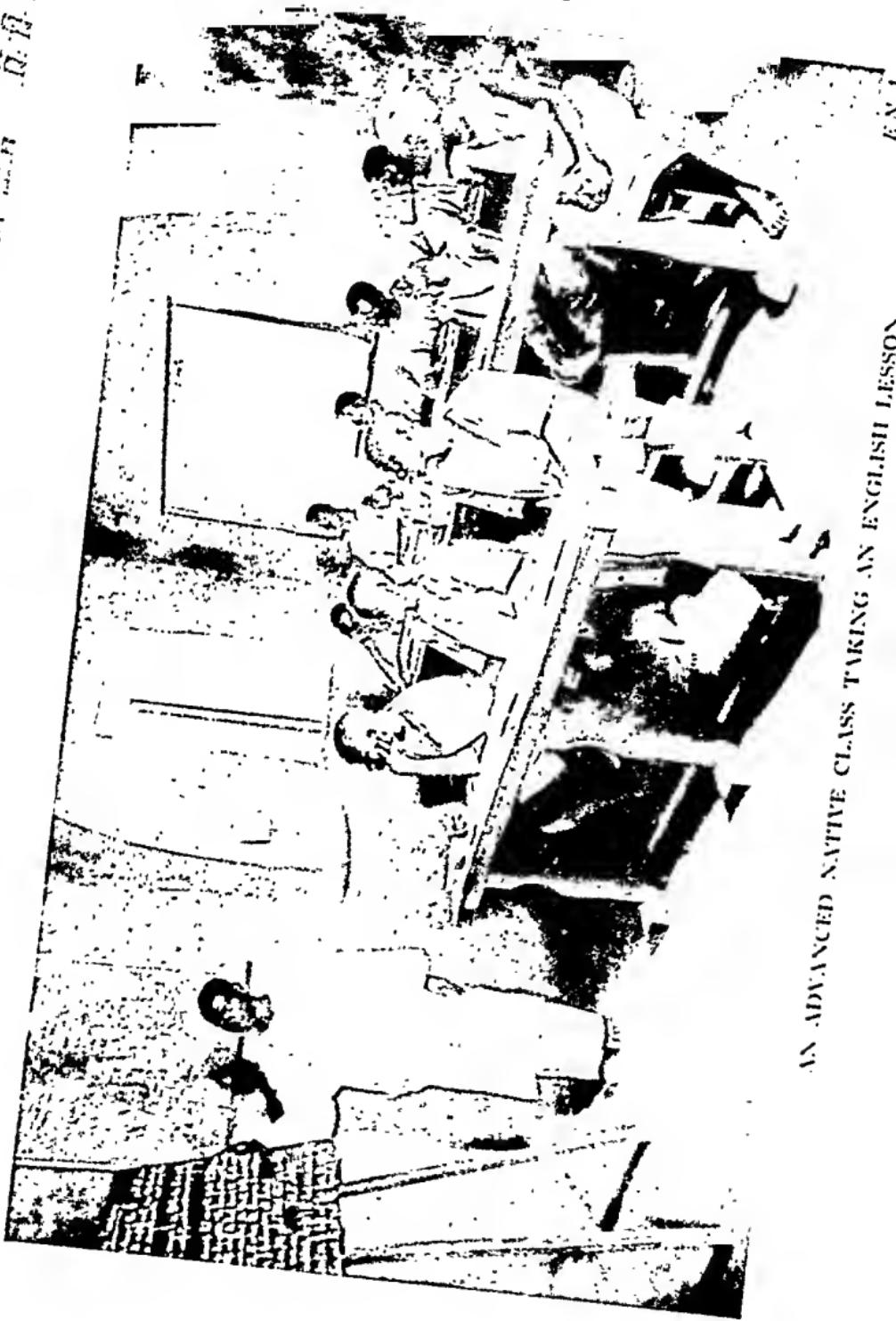
as for example the one at Wangigi's Market near Kabete, can possibly appreciate how well organized such a school can be, even though it is almost entirely in charge of natives.

From the bush schools, pupils who want to carry their education still further go to the central schools at the mission stations. At these schools ordinary elementary education such as that given at the bush schools is of course part of the curriculum, for there are always a number of pupils living in the vicinity who prefer to attend the central school rather than go to a bush school some miles away.

But at the central schools a good deal of more advanced education is also available, and in addition to learning the Swahili language, the higher forms study English, while the standard of arithmetic, &c., which is aimed at is also higher. At these central schools examinations are commonly held under the auspices of the Education Department and the pupils are usually very anxious to obtain one of the certificates which are the reward for success in the examinations.

Usually, to-day, at the mission stations there are two separate and distinct establishments, one for boys and men, and one for girls, although mixed education still occurs at some of the central schools, as it does of course at almost every bush school.

In many cases the central schools are under the direct supervision of a European teacher who has been especially trained for the work, and in fact it is only where there is such a teacher that the Education Department is willing to give grants in aid of it. But even where a trained teacher is not available the



AN ADVANCED NATIVE CLASS TAKING AN ENGLISH LESSON



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European in charge of the mission station is usually able to give more attention and time to the direct supervision of the central school than he possibly can to the bush schools in outlying parts of his district.

In a few cases the staff at a mission station includes a technical instructor, who is responsible for such subjects as carpentry, basket-work, brick-making, and building, and almost always the pupils have to do some manual agricultural work as part of their instruction.

Where the girls' education is carried on separately, the girls' schools are usually under the supervision of trained European women teachers, and the curriculum includes instruction in sewing, knitting and dress-making, in addition to the ordinary subjects taught in the boys' schools.

One of the biggest difficulties in the organization of the girls' school is the fact that most of the girls who pass through the schools get married, and have families almost at once, so that it is difficult to find enough educated native women to fill the posts of assistant teachers. Consequently the teaching staff of many of the girls' schools has to include male teachers drafted from the boys' schools. This difficulty is not in the least solved by the fact that nowadays some of the girls passing through the mission schools are finding it difficult to get husbands (a problem which we have already discussed in connexion with missionary work), because it is very seldom that the girls who fail to find husbands are the ones sufficiently intelligent to make teachers.

For the average pupil the education available at the

central schools is all that he or she requires, and indeed as far as the girls are concerned there is nothing higher attainable at present in the country. For the boys, however, it is different, and any who are really ambitious and who have passed through the central schools can apply to the Alliance High School at Kikuyu. Here, if they are successful in their application they can continue their education, but unfortunately the Alliance High School can only take a restricted number of pupils each year, while, in addition, the fees payable are sometimes beyond the means of those who would like to go there.

At the Alliance High School all instruction is given through the medium of the English language, and the staff consists of British teachers assisted by a Kenya native who has been to college in South Africa. At the present time the principal is a Scotsman, and this fact is responsible for certain humorous difficulties.

I once helped my father to teach English to the more advanced pupils in his school in Kabete, and one of these pupils subsequently went to the Alliance High School. At the end of his first term there I met him and asked him how he was getting on. He replied that it was a very nice school but that he found the language very difficult, and that the most difficult thing of all was dictation. 'You taught me to speak English', he said, 'and to write English dictation, but the trouble is that at the High School the language is not English but Scotch, and Scotch dictation is much more difficult!'

At present not only is the Alliance High School—which owes its origin to an alliance among the lead-

ing missionary societies and which is financially supported by the Government—the only school of its kind in Kenya, but also it provides the highest education available to the natives within the colony. Any who wish for still higher education must seek it outside Kenya. A few go to the Makere College in Uganda, and occasionally one or two go abroad.

The Kikuyu who is at present assistant master at the Alliance High School was a former pupil there, then he went to Fort Hare in South Africa to complete his education, while another old High School boy who desired more advanced education has gone to America.

As I have already said the language of instruction at the High School is English (or Scotch) and in a few of the central schools English is sometimes used as the medium of instruction for the higher forms, while it is of course nearly always a class subject in these forms.

But the rule in Kenya is that when a pupil has learnt to read and write in his own language he must then master the Swahili language before passing to English, and this means that only a comparatively few of the natives receiving education in Kenya are taught English properly.

This is a part of the definite policy of the Education Department, (unless by any chance it has recently been altered) and it is a policy which is in keeping with the fact that Kiswahili is the official language of the Government in all matters relating to native affairs, but I am not at all convinced of its wisdom.

Let us consider briefly what it means. It means

that every year the number of natives who understand Kiswahili properly is increasing rapidly while the number who can speak or even understand English increases very slowly. From the official point of view this is quite satisfactory, for it means that there will be more people each year to whom the Government officials can speak without the need of a vernacular interpreter, but my objection to this is that it means that officials must still learn Kiswahili properly before they attempt to learn a vernacular language. Is that a sound policy either economically or from the point of view of justice? I think not. I have in another chapter shown reasons why the administrators should learn the vernacular language of the district to which they are appointed rather than learn Kiswahili.

Surely as an economy of time and of brain power it would be better to encourage as many natives as possible to learn English, and so not waste precious years of study learning Kiswahili. After all when they have learnt it, it only means that they can converse with the white man in a language which is foreign to both of them.

Even from the administrator's point of view it would surely be more satisfactory to have an ever-increasing number of natives to whom he could speak in his own language instead of in a borrowed one? Of course when he was dealing with natives who could not speak English the official would still have to use an interpreter (until he himself had learnt the vernacular), but as he has to do this often anyhow this is not really an objection.

As far as the natives are concerned there is no

doubt at all that it would be very much to their advantage to be allowed to learn English as soon as possible instead of having to learn Kiswahili first. All the laws of the country—laws which are many of them of vital interest to the native and concern him very intimately—are published in English in the Official Gazette, and moreover they are debated and discussed in English while they are in process of being passed through the Legislative Council.

Seeing that a plea of 'ignorance of the law' is not a valid defence when a law has been broken it is surely only fair to give as many natives as possible the opportunity to learn the language in which the laws of the country are formulated and published.

Then there is another aspect of the matter. The natives who only can stay at school long enough to learn one foreign language have to learn Kiswahili, a language in which there are still only a very few books available. If the natives were encouraged to learn English as soon as they had mastered the art of reading and writing in their own language a vast amount of information would immediately become available to them, I refer of course to English books. As it happens, this is just one of the objections which are often put forward by unthinking people as an argument against allowing natives to learn our language. I have not infrequently heard Englishmen in Kenya say in all seriousness that they would be ashamed to think that the Africans could read and understand some of the books in their homes, and that they therefore do not wish the Africans to be taught English.

Similarly, I have heard it argued that Africans should not be allowed to learn English, as if they did they would understand all the conversation which they chanced to overhear, and it is regarded as particularly deplorable that native *servants* should be allowed to understand English.

These arguments do not appear to me to be very creditable to those who use them, and if an Englishman is ashamed of his books or of his conversation in Kenya, he must surely be equally ashamed of them in England. Everybody knows that there are subjects which people do not discuss in the presence of their servants, and I cannot see any necessity for discussing them in the presence of African servants, or for preventing Africans from learning English on that score.

Moreover, it is idle to imagine that the natives of Kenya can be prevented from learning English, simply by preventing all but a few who go to school from having the opportunity of doing so in school. Even to-day there are many natives in Kenya who can speak and understand English tolerably well although they did not acquire their knowledge in school, for most Africans are born linguists and they can pick up a working knowledge of a foreign tongue more quickly than the average white man could do.

Even if we leave out of consideration the advantages of knowing English to the natives themselves there is always the question of the obvious advantages to the European settler and commercial communities. An Englishman who arrives in Kenya for the first time—either to take up land for himself or to work on a farm for some one else, or even to go into business

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in one of the towns—finds himself terribly handicapped by the fact that he can speak to so few natives, until he himself has learnt either Kiswahili or one of the vernacular languages. But if every year more and more natives were learning English in school, this difficulty would disappear before very long.

I have devoted a good deal of space to this question because I believe that it is a very important one, and one which demands the close attention of every one who is interested in East African questions, but I must now turn back to other educational matters.

Earlier in this chapter I mentioned the institution known as the Jeanes School, where African teachers are specially trained for work in the bush schools. The Jeanes Teachers' Training School is situated very near to Nairobi, and is easily accessible to any one who wishes to visit it and it is certainly worth visiting.

Every teacher who is sent to the school to be trained is expected to bring his wife and family with him, if he is married, and each of these families is given a nice small brick-built cottage to live in during the period of training. Besides the teaching given to the men, the wives also get training so that they may be able to have model homes in the Reserve when their husbands go back as Jeanes Teachers.

The object of the Jeanes School is not to train men for advanced work but to fit them to organize and run small schools among rural communities, and, in addition to the more ordinary subjects, a very great deal of attention is given to subjects like the improvement of agriculture, the building of better

houses, the improvement and development of native dairy work, &c. Hygiene and first aid and physical training also play a big part in the curriculum.

The school has its own very well-run co-operative shop, of which all the teachers in residence become members, and learn something about business on co-operative lines so that they can introduce that into their Reserves.

In connexion with the school there is a small model house and plot. The house is built entirely of materials such as would be obtainable by the ordinary natives in the Reserve, and in such a way as not to be above the means of most of the natives. Around it on the plot of ground the master responsible for agricultural training has his demonstration plots and tries to have a model native garden.

In this connexion I have a serious criticism of the Jeanes School training to make. The demonstration plot for agricultural training consists of a perfectly flat piece of ground, and there is a very serious danger that the teachers will try to apply the planting methods which are successful on this flat ground to the sloping hillsides which form the agricultural land of many tribes. If they do the results will be very far from satisfactory, as I have already shown in another chapter.

The spirit of the Jeanes School is very good, and one cannot help feeling that the teachers trained here are really going back to their Reserves not merely to earn a living but to carry out a crusade of improvement to their people, and the Jeanes Teachers that I have met at work in the Reserves are doing very

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remarkable work, and are mostly spoken of in high praise by the other natives.

Until comparatively recently all such work as carpentry, stone masonry and building in Kenya was entirely in the hands of the Indian artisan classes. Now in addition to the technical training given by some of the missionary societies—and in some cases this is of very high standard as at Waa, a Catholic school in the Kamba country—the Government runs a very big technical training station known as the Native Industrial Training Depot.

Natives who wish to be trained there have to sign on for a five-year contract and they receive a very thorough training in various branches of technical work, and a high standard of efficiency is attained.

Most of those who go to be trained at the N.I.T.D., do so in the hope of employment and that is the principal object of the institution, but a percentage of them return to the Reserves to translate the knowledge they have gained into benefit for their people by helping to build better houses, and by making tables and chairs, &c., for the houses which they build.

No chapter on native education would be complete without mentioning the schools that are run on some of the European farms. There are an ever-increasing number of farms where the settler has built a small school and has installed a teacher. In some cases the school is run as a night school for adults, and as a day school for children, in others it is run simply as a night school for the labourers, and the teacher is employed in some minor clerical capacity on the farm during the day. These schools

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are doing excellent work as they are helping to reduce illiteracy, and one wishes that more settlers would do the same.

Where no recognized school exists on a farm it is very common to find that there are one or two natives among those employed on a farm who have been to school themselves, and these men usually become voluntary teachers and each night a group of natives come to them for instruction, so great is the urge towards knowledge.

Wherever natives are given facilities for education they will certainly make use of them, and if they are not given the opportunities they will make them.

On one farm that I know of the labourers who were only earning 15s. a month got together and each agreed to contribute a shilling a month towards the salary of a teacher. They then built themselves a small school and besides paying their teacher's salary, they spent part of their wages each month in buying books, slates and pencils, and in purchasing oil for lamps. For they did all their study at night after work was over and after they had fed.

Another example of the keenness of the natives of Kenya for education may be found in the fact that most of the tribes gladly pay a Cess of 2s. over and above their hut tax. This Cess is not imposed by the Government, but by the Local Native Councils representing the natives themselves, and the money is largely spent in grants for Education in their Reserves.

There is a school of thought in Kenya that believes that the natives of Kenya are so fundamentally dif-

ferent from Europeans in their brain power and brain capacity, that they ought not to be given education of European type at all. The actual average size of the brain of the native is smaller than that of the average European, and it is alleged that the actual quality of the brain when examined *post mortem* is also different.

It is highly dangerous and unscientific to suggest that the size of brain has anything to do with mental ability, in fact this is demonstrably not the case, for the Esquimaux are the biggest brained people living to-day and are very backward, while other races such as the Japanese (and also the females of the English race) have brains which in size are much smaller than the brains of the Kenya natives, yet they undoubtedly profit by Western education.

The allegation that the quality of the native brain is different from that of the average Englishman is more serious, but it has been admitted that the brains of the natives examined were not of natives who had received education from childhood, while those of the Europeans with which they were compared belonged presumably to people with generations of education behind them.

Seeing that the question involved is one of quality and not of the size of the brain, all that can fairly be claimed for the results obtained is that the brain of a man who has received no education of Western type in the years when his brain is still growing, is different in quality from that of a man who did receive such education.

Meanwhile the test of whether the African can

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assimilate Western education or not, and whether he can benefit by it, is being put to the very real test of practical experience, and when there have been two or three generations of educated Kenya natives we shall be in a position to judge fairly. The indications as far as they go at present, suggest that he can benefit a great deal.

The general tendency of the education of the native in Kenya is to raise the standard of living, and this of course means that the native demands higher wages, so that he can live more cleanly and healthily. The educated native is also more critical and less afraid to make known his criticisms of the white man than his uneducated cousins. There is, too, that inevitable danger of the swollen-head feeling, which however is mainly a passing phase.

Because of these things the increasing education of the African in Kenya is bound to bring with it a temporary increase in friction between the black and white races, unless the latter are prepared to work towards co-operation instead of domination, and unless a great effort is made to understand the native point of view.

## XI

### THE FUTURE OF KENYA

THE SETTLERS of Kenya hope and believe that one day Kenya will be the central figure in a union between Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika and possibly other territories. They are confident that white settlement has come to stay, that it will flourish and grow—especially if they are allowed to take over the reins of government themselves—and that the Highlands of Kenya will be a flourishing centre of European civilization, a true white man's country, in the middle of the African continent.

The future development of Kenya and the success or otherwise of white settlement is not, however, simply dependent on Government policy, although of course that factor will play its part. Things which are beyond the control of man in his present state of knowledge have got to be taken into consideration.

As we saw in the brief survey of Kenya's past, the climate of the country has been subject to a number of great changes during the time that man has been living in these, and it behoves us to see if we can learn anything of what this means for the future.

Ever since about 850 B.C. the climate has been getting gradually drier and drier. At that time the lakes in

the Rift Valley stood at a much higher level than to-day and agriculture was still possible in areas where to-day it is out of the question. Let us take one lake—Lake Nakuru—as an example of what the climate is doing. About 850 B.C. the waters stood over one hundred and forty-three feet above their present level, and were sufficiently fresh still to have fresh-water fish living in them. In 1906 the Nakuru area was mapped and the mean level of the lake at that time was indicated. Between that date and 1929 the mean level had sunk another five feet and when careful soundings were taken it was found that the deepest point was only nine feet two inches.

The shallower a lake becomes, the more rapidly does evaporation take place, and, as a result of three successive years of very low rainfall, the level at the beginning of 1935 was very low indeed and in spite of fairly good rains this year the lake has not been able to recover even to its 1929 level. The general record shows that the lake level has been dropping continuously, although an occasional abnormally wet year temporarily restores it. As I have already mentioned in Chapter II the evidence of gradually increasing desiccation is not confined to the lakes, nor even to Kenya, and the problem as far as Kenya's future is concerned is to know how long the desiccation is going to continue before renewed pluvial conditions set in.

All the available evidence suggests that the changes of climate are slow and gradual and also that we are still definitely in a period of pluvial decline. From the rainfall point of view the prospects of the im-





mediate future—to say the next two or three hundred years—are certainly not rosy. That there will be very wet years or even cycles of wet years is almost certain, but in my opinion the general trend will be towards further desiccation.

Probably Kenya has plenty of underground water supplies which could be tapped, and undoubtedly a great deal could be done in the way of water conservation, so as to supply water for the needs of the human population, but the country as a whole is likely to suffer.

The soil erosion which is taking place so alarmingly in some parts of the country, and the destruction of so much forest by fires, are both commonly attributed to the natives and their carelessness. I believe, however, that the more important factor governing both these troubles is a purely climatic one, although it is probably true that excessive grazing by goats and sheep, and carelessness with fire in forest areas, is hastening the process of Nature.

If desiccation really goes on for the next two or three hundred years at the rate at which it has been at work in the past few hundred, it will not only be the European community in Kenya that will suffer but also the natives, and as they have less money at their disposal for water boring and for water conservation, the latter will probably suffer the worst. The Africans, however, will have nowhere else to go, while the white man will be able to retire to other parts of the world if he so wishes, which he may well do, as decreasing rainfall will make farming less and less profitable.

In Chapter II we also saw that in comparatively recent times Kenya—and indeed the whole of East Africa—was the scene of very violent upheavals. At present Kenya is enjoying a period of rest from earthquakes of a serious nature, but there are many indications which suggest that volcanic activity and earth movements might break out again at any moment. This would not necessarily mean that Kenya ceased to be an excellent country to live in, but undoubtedly if this did happen it would be more serious for the European community than for the natives.

If Eburru Mountain for example broke into eruption once more, it would cut the railway in half, and so would disorganize the economic life of the country considerably ; but the natives, who are not really at all dependent upon the railway, would hardly suffer.

Whatever the future of Kenya may or may not be, it is certainly clear that it lies in an earthquake zone, and those who build in Kenya where space is plentiful would certainly be wise to build outwards and not upwards. If a serious earthquake took place the damage to buildings of several stories would be much greater than that to bungalows, while the damage to native huts scattered all over the country would be negligible, for the more developed a culture is the more risk of damage by Nature.

Since the continued desiccation of Kenya and the risk of earthquakes are both of them only probable and not certain, let us leave them out of consideration for the moment, and try to see what the future of Kenya will be if climate and stability remain as they are now.

## THE FUTURE OF KENYA

At the present time the settlers and the European commercial community in Kenya are faced with a very serious economic situation, and, in the words of many of them, they are 'on the verge of ruin'. This is attributed not only to the world depression and to three successive years of drought and serious locust plague, but also to over-taxation and to a Government which is too costly for the country.

At a recent political meeting one settler of long standing and experience in Kenya stated it as his opinion that 'there were about ninety per cent. too many public servants in the country', and although most people do not hold such an extreme view, a great many of the white men in Kenya certainly believe that the Government Departments are over-staffed.

The settler and the commercial communities would like to have the control of the country in their own hands so that they could reduce the expenses of government drastically and cut down taxation. They believe that this would be a panacea for all evils.

If the Government existed only for the benefit of the white man and had no responsibilities to the three million native inhabitants, then undoubtedly it would be true that the Government was over-staffed. But one cannot help wondering what would happen to the native interests if the drastic reduction in staff which the settlers advocate were put into operation.

One of the great difficulties in Kenya is that it is very difficult to estimate the proportion in which the Africans, the white community, and the Asiatics contribute to the cost of running the country, and it is still harder to determine the expenditure in relation

to the contributions of these three communities owing to the fact that so many services exist for the benefit of the country as a whole. Some people think that the natives get most service in proportion to what they contribute, but others—and I am one of them—think they do not get a fair return. Whichever view may be the true one it is more or less certain that if the staff of the Government Departments were drastically reduced the natives would suffer.

At a time when Kenya was in a very serious position, she was more or less miraculously saved by the discovery of gold on a fairly large scale, and this has resulted in a good deal of money coming into the country that would not otherwise have done so. The development of the goldfields is undoubtedly going to be of very great benefit to the Europeans in the country, and many people believe that it will save white settlement in Kenya from utter ruin. That, however, remains to be seen. Will the presence of extensive gold-mining in the country be of any real benefit to the agricultural communities? Certainly an ever-growing mining community will consume more and more local agricultural produce, but what the agricultural communities need most is to be able to export on a large scale.

I have already pointed out that one of the biggest drawbacks to this is that only the high-priced commodities can ever really pay, and these only as long as labour is cheap, and conditions generally favourable. Two or three successive dry years, or worse still, the continuation of the progressive desiccation which is undoubtedly going on at present, are enough to cause

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havoc to the agricultural communities, and especially to those who are working on a large scale and so have more to lose.

No discussion of the future of Kenya can ignore the Indian population. The early development of Kenya was very largely due to the building of the railway to Uganda and as in those days the natives of Kenya were very unwilling to work for the white man, the labour for this immense task consisted for the most part of Indian coolies, brought over especially for this work and this was the beginning of the real penetration of the country by the Indian races. Having come into the country in this way, many of them stayed on as artisans and small traders, and those who went back to India took with them the news of a country which was being rapidly developed and where there were many opportunities for the stone-mason and the carpenter as well as for the small trader.

More and more Indians came over, many of them brought their families with them, and now in Kenya there is quite a considerable Indian community. For the most part the Indians are concentrated in the townships, and for a very long time they had an almost absolute monopoly of all the building-work in the country, as well as of joinery and carpentry.

The Indians still have a very strong hold on these classes of work although to some extent they are now facing competition from the Africans. One of the reasons why the Indians have been so successful in this work, and one of the reasons why they still hold their own to a great extent, is that they are very hard workers. An Indian undertakes most of the work

which he does on a contract basis, and then works seven days out of seven and from dawn to sunset. He usually does this because his one object in life is simply to accumulate enough money to enable him to return to India and settle down comfortably. Having very few, if any, local interests, he has no wish for free time, and he is quite willing to work on more or less continuously.

His living expenses, too, are exceedingly low, his wants are simple and he is prepared to live in a very restricted space, and does not mind a bit being greatly overcrowded.

There is no doubt at all that the country could not have been developed in the way that it has been, if it had not been for the Indian artisan workers. The natives were for many years quite incapable of doing the work which the Indians could do, and which they performed for comparatively small wages. And if there had been no Indians and the artisan work had had to be done by workmen from England, the costs would have been very much greater.

To-day the Indian finds himself in the unenviable position of having to face not only a rapidly growing competition but also a distinct unfriendliness.

The natives who have been trained in technical work wish that all the Indian artisans would go back to India, so that they could get better chances of employment themselves. The Europeans resent the presence of the Indians (although they continue to employ them extensively), because they argue that the Indians simply make money to take it out of the country instead of spending it in Kenya and so keeping it in

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circulation. The Europeans also resent the presence of the Indian because of the political aspirations of the leaders of the Indian community who—as British subjects—claim that they should have equal rights with the Englishmen in Kenya.

Besides the artisan classes there can be no doubt at all that, in the past, the Indians of the small trader class have also done a great deal to develop trade in Kenya, even if their activities in this direction have not always earned them the gratitude of the people they have served.

In many of the lesser townships of Kenya as well as in the outlying districts the presence of Indian shops or 'Dukas' was and still is a great boon both to the white man and to the African. As a result of their keen commercial instincts combined with their ability to live at a very low cost, they were able to initiate and carry out business in areas where the number of customers was too small to make business for a European trader profitable, since the turnover would be insufficient to make a living after paying overhead charges, &c. From the native point of view the establishment of Indian trading-stores all over the country was for many years also very advantageous. With an Indian trading-store in the district a native could dispose of his surplus crops of maize and beans without having to walk for miles to the nearest town (where anyhow he would have had to deal with another Indian), and even if the Indian did not pay very high prices he did pay cash down, or if the native preferred it he could receive goods from the store in exchange for his produce.

So long as times were good the natives in the outlying districts remained on good terms with the Indians, but when the failure of a rainy season necessitated going to the Indian store to buy maize and other foods, and when the natives found that they were having to pay a price about four times as great as any they had received for maize when they were sellers, their resentment was great.

To-day the Africans themselves are very slowly, but none the less surely, taking up the role of small trader, especially in the Reserves, and this process will certainly go on. It is all to the advantage of the native community as a whole, but it means that the Indians of the trader and artisan classes are both going to be seriously challenged, and they may find that they can no longer make a living in Kenya in these professions. It is possible that the Indians will try to take up land and become agriculturalists, but owing to the restrictions placed upon the settlement of any but Europeans in the White Highlands, and the fact that most of the other good agricultural land is Native Reserve, this is not going to be easy unless a part of the 'White Highland' area is thrown open to them. To this the settlers will never voluntarily agree, but economic conditions may ultimately make it a necessity.

As far as the towns are concerned the position of the Indians as small shopkeepers will probably be secure for a much longer time than elsewhere, in fact they are likely to consolidate their position, for in the towns the lower class Indians can live as cheaply if not more cheaply than the Africans, and they have

the additional advantage of being already very firmly established.

In any attempt to envisage the future of Kenya the political situation must be taken into consideration. As we have already seen the white population is clamouring for more say in the government of the country. They claim that as taxpayers they should have control of how their money is spent.

Every year more and more Indians and Africans are being educated and of course they too are taxpayers, and they too will demand proper representation. The Indians are far more numerous than the white men and they are British subjects. In their own country steps are being taken to give them a very large measure of self-government, and they will argue quite logically that they are no more aliens in Kenya than are the Europeans. If Indians in India are considered to have reached a stage where they can have a say in government, why should not the Indians in Kenya be treated in the same way? The proportion of literate Indians in Kenya is higher than in India, and their interests are very much bound up with those of the country which they have made their home.

The Europeans in Kenya are certain to take a strong objection to such views, and it is not inconceivable that their desire to get control of the government of the country as soon as possible is not altogether unconnected with a wish to be in a position to say NO to claims which Indians and Africans will undoubtedly make as the years go by.

Quite a number of the African tribes, and more

especially the Kikuyu and the Kavirondo, are becoming politically minded, and although a good many years must elapse before they can make any claim to be as well educated as the white man, they are certain to claim political equality before very long.

The future development of Kenya will thus depend very largely upon the attitude which the Home Government takes to the claims of the European community.

To me it seems that in a country such as Kenya where there are three such different communities, whose numerical strength is in inverse ratio to their wealth and their education, the only possible and fair form of government is that in force to-day ; that is to say government by an impartial body of officials recruited from England.

If the European community were to be given self-government, it would for all practical purposes amount to government of the employees by the employer, government of the poor by the rich.

The white community in Kenya believes and fervently hopes that its numbers will be greatly increased as years go on, and schemes to promote closer settlement and to encourage new settlers to come to the country are continually being discussed. In spite of the fact that a great many settlers in Kenya to-day are in their own words 'on the verge of ruin' and in spite of the fact that they consider themselves to be grossly overtaxed, Kenya is still advertised as offering 'unlimited scope for the settler' and among the advantages held out to attract 'men with moderate means' is the fact that 'taxation is light according to

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English standards'. Personally, I do not believe that the prospects are at all good for the man who has only moderate means, unless this includes an absolutely assured private income, which is not going to be affected wherever he lives.

I have a great many friends in Kenya, and some of them will probably think that I am being a traitor to the country I was born in when I say this. But I believe that it is true. There will undoubtedly always be a certain number of white men living in Kenya, the mining communities, the men employed by big tea, coffee, and sisal companies, a commercial community, and as many settlers as are needed to supply local demands for produce.

In addition, owing to its climate and its sport facilities, Kenya will always attract a number of retired people with private incomes and a desire to live out of England. But I do NOT believe that in the Kenya of the future there will be a big white population of *small farmers* growing crops for export, for I believe that insect pests, unreliable rainfall, and ever-increasing but slow desiccation will make farming for export unprofitable.

I find it very much more difficult to try and estimate what the future of the Indian community is going to be. Undoubtedly the Africans are going to compete very strongly for a great deal of the trade that is at the moment in Indian hands, and more especially for trade that is in the Reserves. Even in the towns I believe that the African natives will eventually compete with the small Indian shopkeepers, but I think that will not be for a very long time yet. The Indians as I

have already said have the advantage of a strongly established footing, and they are also more easily able to command the capital necessary for trading-sites in the towns.

In the artisan classes of work the African is almost certain to take the place of the Indian before very many years have passed, and I believe that in about twenty-five years the Africans will almost monopolize the work which is at present done by Indian 'fundis' —as stone-masons, carpenters, cobblers, &c. In discussing this with some of the leading Indians in Kenya to-day I have gained the impression that it is fully realized and that many of the Indians believe that a proportion of the Indians in Kenya will in the future find their place as peasant farmers on the land. Personally I am doubtful of this, and I believe that the problem of an unemployed class among the Indian community will before long become a very serious one.

The future of the African inhabitants of Kenya is the most difficult of all to assess, some of the tribes like the Kikuyu and the Kavirondo, but more especially the former, show signs of an ability to develop very rapidly. Their first reaction to the stimulus of education was to aim at finding employment in the towns, but already a great number of those who have some education are realizing that cultivation is just as worthy an occupation and that it is often more remunerative.

Of course at present only a very small proportion of the Africans of Kenya can even read and write, but it has to be born in mind that education has only been available to them for a very short time. Already

there is a small number of growing men and women, born of parents who have had some education, and it is very noticeable that these are reaching a standard which was quite unattainable for their parents who were born under purely tribal conditions.

The biggest problem of the future of these two tribes is bound up with the question of room for expansion. They will want more and more land to cultivate, not only because there is a very marked increase in population due to medical help and the reduction of infantile mortality, but also because they are going to demand not only enough land to grow the necessities of life, but in addition land to develop as farmers, land on which they can grow produce for the world's markets.

Already the Kavirondo are becoming cotton growers on an ever-increasing scale, and the Kikuyu whose land is unsuited to cotton will want to grow coffee, maize and pyrethrum and other profitable crops.

Possibly the solution of the demand for more land will be found in the fact that much of the land that is now alienated to Europeans will be unoccupied and will be allowed to revert to the African tribes who can make full use of it. Such a suggestion as this is anathema to the white population of Kenya, whose slogan is 'The Highlands of Kenya for the white man', and, as the law stands to-day, the 'White Highlands' cannot revert to the Africans. But if I have diagnosed the future of European settlement aright, the day is not so very far distant when a proportion of the settlers will be only too glad to let the Government buy back their farms and add them to the native areas.

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Although the Kikuyu and the Kavirondo are the biggest and most progressive tribes in Kenya, the future of the natives as a whole is not necessarily the same as theirs. Tribes like the Masai who show very little desire to adopt any Western ideas and who are not increasing in numbers, but, if anything, diminishing, present quite a different problem. Unless they can be persuaded to alter their whole mode of life, it looks as if they will gradually cease to exist. A proportion of the population of these tribes will probably be absorbed by other more progressive ones—the Kikuyu are already showing signs of absorbing and influencing a part of the Masai, for example—while the others will remain more or less as museum specimens, and will gradually die out.

If the future development of Kenya is going to be along the lines that I have suggested, if it is going to be a country where the black races are going to develop more and more, and where European interests will be mainly confined to great mining and commercial undertakings, and to a few big companies producing crops like tea and coffee and sisal on a large scale, the solution of some of the problems which I have indicated in this book becomes not only desirable but imperative in the interests of all.

The Africans in Kenya will develop more or less on Western lines, whether we like it or not. If we study their needs and their problems, if we help them wisely, if we win their friendship and co-operation, then I am convinced that they will prove to be worthy and loyal members of the Empire.

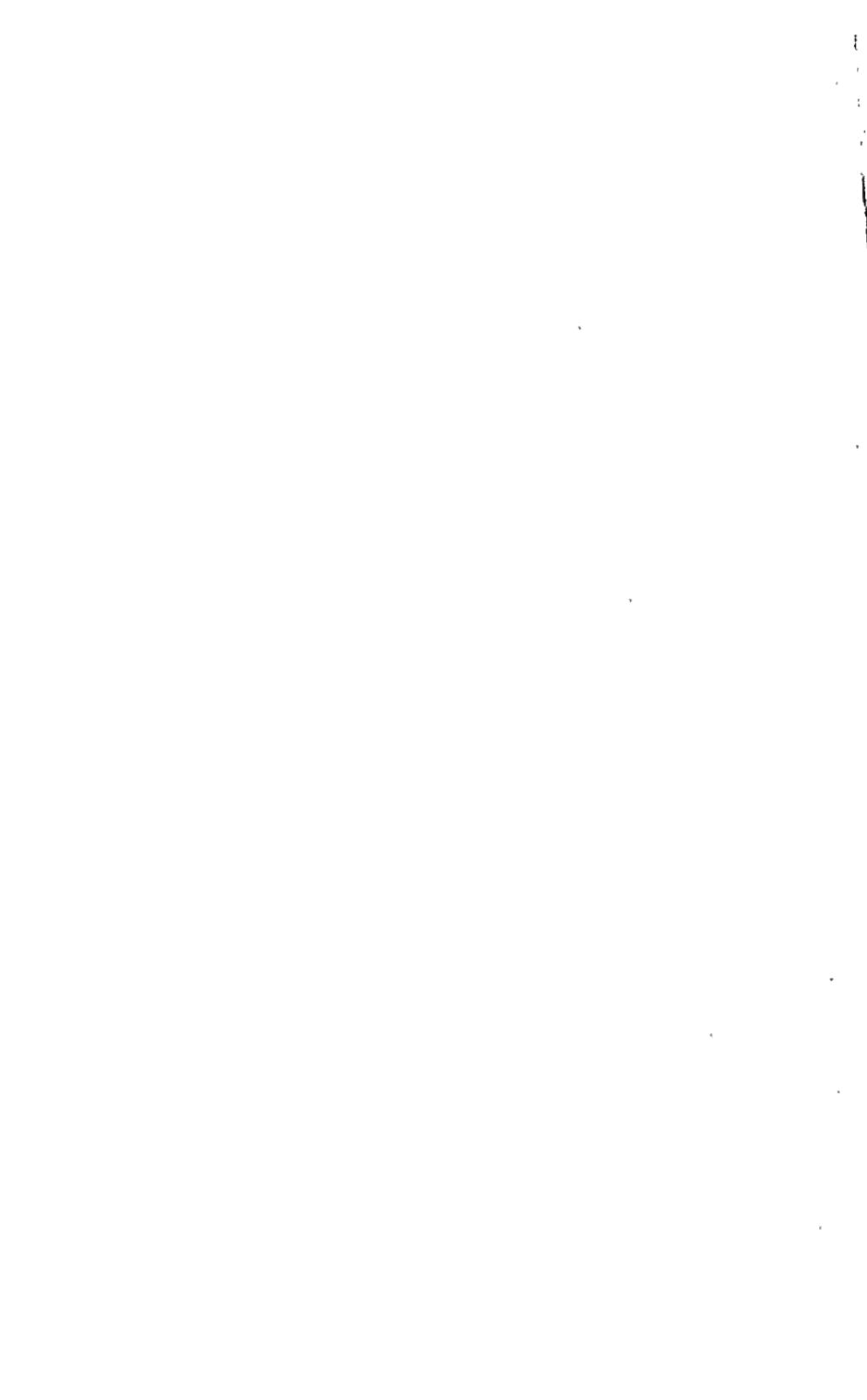
If on the other hand we prefer to take the short-

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sighted view that nothing must be done that is not to the immediate interest of the white community, we shall not completely prevent the development of the African although we may slow it down, but at the same time we shall nurse and foster a spirit of distrust, that will in time take its own revenge to the very detriment of the interests of the white man that we were trying to help.

Even though I am certain that Kenya will never be the white man's country in the sense that many would wish, I am certain that the white race has got its place, and that place can only be made safe and economically sound if the interests of the black man are studied to the full.

Kenya is the Land of Contrasts and Problems, and whatever its future may prove to be, many of the contrasts will remain, while the solution of the present-day problems will inevitably lead to the growth of fresh ones for future generations to tackle. The cultural differences between the black and white and brown races which inhabit the colony will grow less and less, while the interests of the three communities will become more and more interdependent and similar.



## APPENDIX

LEST ANYONE who reads my chapter on Administration in Kenya should think that I am overstating the case when I complain of the too constant moving of officials in the Colony, I here append extracts from lists of movements of officers, &c., which I have compiled from the Official Gazette.

*This list shows the officers who served at two of the most important stations in Kenya in seven years.*

### SOUTH KAVIRONDO

DISTRICT OFFICERS		DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS	
Darroch, R. G.	Oct. 1928	Anderson, L. B.	June 1928
Hamilton-Ross, J. G.	Dec. 1928	Hodge, S. O. V.	Jan. 1929
Foster, O. F.	June 1929	Buxton, C. E.	Nov. 1931
Carr, H. A.	Aug. 1929	Dawson, J. V.	July 1934
Bond, B. W.	Mar. 1930	Carver, H. R.	Mar. 1935
Atkins, C. F.	Aug. 1930	McKay, D.	Mar. 1935
Coghill, J.	Aug. 1930		
Gregory-Smith, G.	Feb. 1931		
Hyde-Clark, M.	July 1931		
Carr, H. A.	Aug. 1931		
O'Hagan, D.	Aug. 1931		
Bond, B. W.	Feb. 1932		
Davies, R. St. A.	Mar. 1932		
Bromhead, Jd.	Oct. 1932		
Carver	Oct. 1932		

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## KIAMBU

## DISTRICT OFFICERS

Davies, R. St. A.	Apr. 1928
Lindsay, K. G.	Sept. 1928
Palethorpe, R.	June 1929
Gilliopi, I. R.	Oct. 1929
Tisdall, G. St. C.	Feb. 1930
Weaving, L. A.	June 1930
Lindsay, K. G.	Sept. 1930
Lindsay, K. G.	July 1931
Potter, H. S.	Sept. 1931
Williams, C. H.	Aug. 1931
Kidd, D.	May 1932
Lewis, J. H.	June 1932
Perreau, W. A.	Nov. 1933
Lambert, J. E. H.	July 1934
Brown, B.	Apr. 1935
Davies, R. St. A.	Apr. 1935

## DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS

Evans, H. G.	May 1929
Fazen, S. H.	Sept. 1929
Sutcliffe, A. W.	Oct. 1930
La Fontaine, H.	Nov. 1930
Lindsay, K. G.	
(Acting)	Apr. 1931
Fazan, S. H.	July 1931
McKean	Apr. 1932
Hopkins, J. G.	May 1933
Seldon, A. A.	Feb. 1934
Hopkins, J. G.	Mar. 1935

*This list, taken at random from a table of the officers and their movements in the last seven years, speaks for itself.*

DARROCH, R. G.	A.D.C.	Kisumu	Londiani	May 1928
	A.D.C.	Central	Kavir-	
		ondo . . .	Jan. 1928	
(11 changes in 6 years.)	A.D.C.	Londiani . . .	July 1928	
	A.D.C.	South Kavirondo . . .	Oct. 1928	
	A.D.C.	Kerio . . .	May 1929	
	A.D.C.	South Nyeri . . .	Apr. 1930	
	D.O.	Tellemugger . . .	May 1930	
	D.O.	Kiambu . . .	May 1931	
	D.O.	Isiolo . . .	Aug. 1931	
	Secretariat	Nairobi . . .	Jan. 1933	
	D.C.	Garissa . . .	Mar. 1934	
DAVENPORT, C. T.	Act.D.C.	Mayale . . .	July 1928	
(5 changes in 6 years.)	A.D.C.	Fort Hall . . .	Feb. 1929	
	D.C.	Digo . . .	May 1930	
	D.C.	Elgeyo . . .	Dec. 1933	
	D.C.	Central Kavir-		
		ondo . . .	Mar. 1934	

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DAWSON, J. V. (Died in 1935.)	D.C.	Narok . . .	Dec. 1929
	D.C.	" . . .	Dec. 1933
	D.C.	South Kavirondo	July 1934
DEVERELL, (4 changes in 3 years.)	D.O.	Kitui . . .	Aug. 1931
	D.O.	South Lumbwa	Nov. 1932
	D.O.	Isiolo . . .	Oct. 1933
	Secretariat	Nairobi . . .	Aug. 1934
		" . . .	Aug. 1934
	Reverts to D.O.		
EDWARDS, D. (5 changes in 6 years.)	R.M.	Nakuru . . .	Nov. 1928
	R.M.	Nairobi . . .	June 1930
	R.M.	Nakuru . . .	July 1930
	R.M.	Eldoret . . .	July 1931
	R.M.	Nairobi . . .	Jan. 1934
ELPHINSTONE, H. G. (6 changes in 6 years.)	A.R.C.	Mombasa . . .	May 1928
	D.O.	Meru . . .	Dec. 1930
	A.R.M.	Nairobi . . .	Aug. 1931
	Native Aff.	" . . .	Feb. 1933
	D.C.	Kilifi . . .	Mar. 1933
	Rec. Titles	Nairobi . . .	June 1933
	D.C.	Teita . . .	Aug. 1934
EMLEY, E. D. (9 changes in 6 years.)	D.C.	Kitui . . .	June 1928
	D.C.	Tana Rivu . . .	Jan. 1928
	D.C.	South Turkana	Aug. 1929
	D.O.	Baringo . . .	Nov. 1930
	D.C.	Elgeyo . . .	Jan. 1931
	D.C.	Kilifi . . .	May 1932
	D.C.	Embu . . .	Oct. 1933
	D.O.	Nairobi . . .	Feb. 1934
	A.R.M.	Kisumu . . .	Feb. 1934
EVANS, H. G. (7 changes in 5½ years.)	D.C.	Machakos . . .	Jan. 1928
	D.C.	Kiambu . . .	May 1929
	D.C.	Thika . . .	June 1929
	D.C.	Fort Hall . . .	June 1929
	D.C.	Laikipia . . .	Feb. 1931
	D.C.	Vasin Gishu . .	May 1931
	D.O.	North Kavirondo	Apr. 1934

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FIELD-JONES, A. (4 changes in 3 years.)	A.S.C.	Nyanza . . .	Apr. 1928
	R.C.	Naivasha . . .	Feb. 1928
	R.C.	Eldoret . . .	Sept. 1929
	P.C.	Mombasa . . .	May 1931
MCKEAN, L. (3 changes in 5 years.)	D.C.	North Turkana	Jan. 1928
	D.C.	” ”	Nov. 1930
	D.C.	Kiambu . . .	Apr. 1932
	D.C.	Kilifi . . .	Dec. 1933
MULLINS, A. C. M. (9 changes in 6 years.)	A.D.C.	South Turkana	Mar. 1928
	A.D.C.	Digo . . .	Mar. 1929
	A.D.C.	Fort Hall . . .	Dec. 1929
	A.D.C.	Meru . . .	Feb. 1930
	D.O.	Isiolo . . .	Dec. 1930
	D.C.	” ”	Jan. 1931
	D.C.	Moyale . . .	Sept. 1931
	D.O.	Meru . . .	Oct. 1933
	D.C.	Tana . . .	June 1934
	D.C.	Lamu . . .	Nov. 1934
MURPHY, H. B. (5 changes in 5 years.)	D.O.	Kitui . . .	Sept. 1930
	D.C.	Embu . . .	Aug. 1931
	D.C.	Tana . . .	Mar. 1932
	D.O.	Fort Hall . . .	Apr. 1934
	D.C.	Baringo . . .	Apr. 1935
NORMAN, C. B. (8 changes in 6 years.)	A.B.C.	South Lumbwa	Mar. 1928
	A.D.C.	Kitui . . .	Sept. 1929
	D.O.	Mombasa . . .	May 1930
	D.O.	Kilifi . . .	July 1930
	D.O.	Mombasa . . .	Aug. 1930
	D.C.	Moyale . . .	Jan. 1933
	D.C.	Garissa . . .	May 1933
	D.C.	” ”	Dec. 1933
	D.O.	Kitui . . .	Mar. 1934
O'HAGAN, D. (4 changes in 4 years.)	D.O.	South Kavirondo	Aug. 1931
	D.O.	Central Kavirondo . . .	Jan. 1933
	D.O.	Baringo . . .	Dec. 1933
	D.O.	Digo . . .	Sept. 1935

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OLDFIELD, H. G. (8 changes in 7 years.)	Act.D.C.	Lamu	.	.	Dec. 1928
	A.D.C.	Kilifi	.	.	Jan. 1929
	D.C.	Baringo	.	.	Apr. 1929
	A.D.C.	Nairobi	.	.	Jan. 1930
	D.C.	Laikipia	.	.	Mar. 1930
	D.C.	Marsabit	.	.	Oct. 1931
	A.R.M.	Nakuru	.	.	Sept. 1933
	D.O.	"	.	.	July 1934
OSBORNE, P. S. (4 changes in 2½ years.)	A.R.M.	Eldoret	.	.	Mar. 1935
	D.O.	Mochakos	.	.	Aug. 1931
	D.O.	Kitui	.	.	Nov. 1932
	D.O.	Mochakos	.	.	Jan. 1933
	D.O.	North Kavirondo	.	.	Feb. 1933
PEDRAZA, R. (5 changes in 6 years.)	D.O.	Turkana	.	.	Dec. 1933
	D.C.	West Suk	.	.	Jan. 1928
	D.C.	Kilifi	.	.	May 1930
	D.C.	Mombasa	.	.	May 1932
	D.C.	Embu	.	.	June 1933
PERREAU, W. A. (7 changes in 6 years.)	D.C.	Mombasa	.	.	May 1933
	Act.D.C.	Garba Tula	.	.	Oct. 1928
	A.D.C.	Moyale	.	.	May 1929
	D.C.	Wajir	.	.	Mar. 1930
	D.C.	Eldama Ravine	.	.	Mar. 1931
	D.C.	"	"	.	June 1932
	D.C.	South Turkana	.	.	Feb. 1933
	D.O.	Kiambu	.	.	Nov. 1933
	D.O.	Central Kavirondo	.	.	Aug. 1934

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